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Amiga screen shots shown



ST screen shots shown

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Emlyn Hughes



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Robocop slugs it out with a chainsaw wielding maniac in Stage One.



Shoot the bad guy, but mind the girl. Remember Directive Number Two.



The photo-fit section. Match the face on the right to the one on the left.

IT'S not often the launch of a new computer game coincides with the launch of a new coin-op machine. But that's what has happened this month with *Robocop*. Data East have just produced the coin-op machine (see Future Cops in the Arcades Section this issue), and now Ocean are poised to launch the computer game.

Obviously, both versions have their roots in the film, but Ocean – having seen early versions of the Data East game – had a choice. They could either do a straight coin-op conversion, or leave the coin-op alone completely and concentrate on turning the film plot into a playable game – something they had done previously with *Platoon*. In the end they decided to combine the two.

The game breaks down into nine main sections, each section based on sequences from the film. The first stage has the player controlling Robocop as he goes about his daily busi-

ROBOCOP

Part man, part machine, all OCEAN

ness of serving the public trust, i.e. shooting baddies. This horizontally-scrolling part of the game is heavily inspired by the coin-op. Baddies appear on street level and from first floor windows and most of them are armed with pistols or chainsaws.

You have to shoot the baddies (each baddy takes at least two shots before he dies) while avoiding their shots. To make life easier there are four types of extra weapon to pick up including three-way shots and super shots that allow you to take baddies out with one shot. The Manta Gun that is used at the end of the film also makes an appearance towards the end of the game.

You have a limited supply of energy, and every time you take a hit the meter drops a little. Fortunately, extra energy capsules can be collected, but allow the energy to drop too much and you lose one of the initial three lives. Other parts of the game include a target-shooting sequence where the player has to shoot a

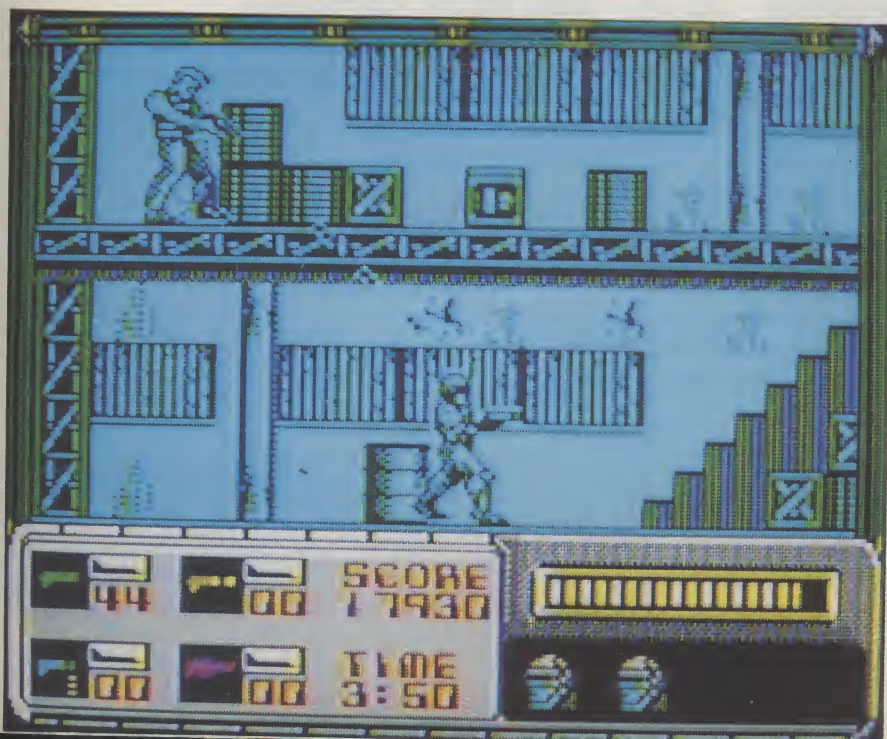
baddy who is holding a woman hostage – hit the woman and your health meter suffers severely (Directive Number Two: Protect the Innocent). There is also a photo-fit ID sequence with 40 seconds available to match up pieces of a face and build up an Identikit picture for the face shown on screen. Finally, there are shoot-em-up sequences in the drugs factory and the junk yard.

Combining elements from the coin-op with the Ocean interpretation of the film has worked well. There's plenty of shoot-em-up action, and the other sequences capture the feel and flavour of the film.

● Andy Smith

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SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics are great and the music and digitised speech on the 128K version are very mood-setting. It's fun to play and, though the first few stages are a little easy, the game is tough enough to keep you playing. 48K owners will have to multi-load the game and miss out on all that speech and music, which is a shame.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	2
AUDIO	8	FUN FACTOR	8
ACE RATING 807			

In the drugs factory. There's an extra weapon directly above Robocop – if he can get to it...

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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LAST NINJA II

SYSTEM 3 goes Hnya!

YOU just can't keep a good Ninja down, especially when he's Armakuni, the chap who you helped to defeat the evil shogun in *Last Ninja*. It was only a temporary victory though, as Kunitoki has risen again, more powerful than ever.

Instead of the green and pleasant lands of the original, this time around the no-good Shogun has picked the towering skyscrapers and tough streets of New York to spread his wicked ways.

Our hero has to find his way through five different areas, each taking a load, until he reaches the baddies' retreat.

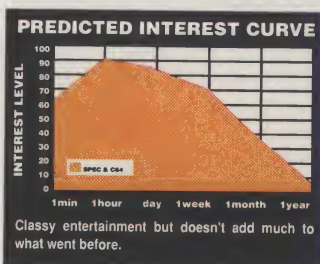
Knife-wielding muggers, punks and other Ninjas block progress on the journey to the evil Shogun, and even the police join in the battle! At the start, you fight with fists and feet - there are a few unarmed moves available, but careful exploration should soon lead to a weapon, which makes the whole fighting process a lot less painful. Sometimes it's worth avoiding battle altogether to preserve that all-important life force.

A puzzle element to the game consists mainly of finding objects and fitting them to obvious situations... nothing to really stretch the brain. The real problems come with the over-complicated control system which makes even simple tasks like picking up objects and leaving rooms difficult.

Last Ninja II is a curious mix between a beat-em-up and arcade

adventure. Fans of the original will probably enjoy it, but rather than an improvement it's more of a scenery change.

● Robin Alway



C64 VERSION

Like the Spectrum version, excellent graphics feature but control isn't easy.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 6
AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 6
ACE RATING 747

SPECTRUM VERSION

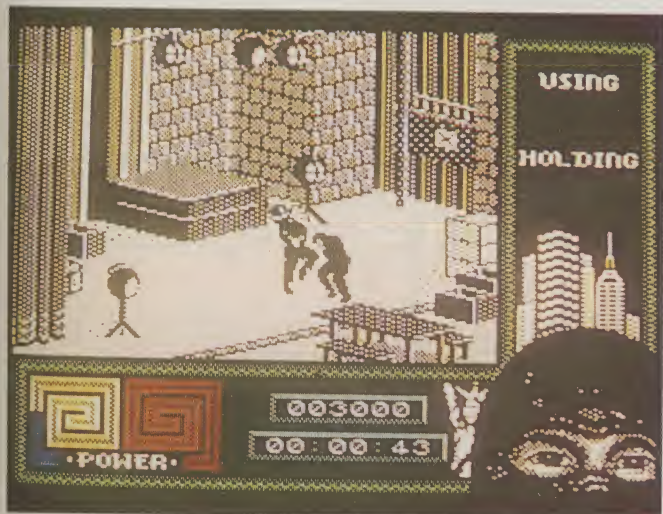
Visually excellent with atmospheric graphics and detailed animation, it's a shame the difficult controls and general unplayability make this a lot less absorbing than it could be.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 6
AUDIO 4 FUN FACTOR 6
ACE RATING 747

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Spec - this is the second location you'll enter and contains the first guard to fight. On the back wall is a block, which has to be punched out to open a tradoor on the start screen.



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MACH RIDER	£29.95cart	OUT NOW
PUNCH OUT	£29.95cart	OUT NOW

I don't know whether the 'mach' bit refers to the speed of the rider in this game, or to his macho qualities. I'm sure that Nintendo nintended it both ways, as usual. Don't you just love literally translated Japanese? All those cars named after bowls of fruit and flowers. Doesn't it crease you up?

Mach Rider takes you into the fast lane, via the likes of *Road Blasters* and *Super Hang On*. You drive a fast bike, with four gears, chased by evil trikes along a twisted roadway lined by oil drums. Oil and water on the road surface can lead to a skid, and anything you bump into



Nintendo - life in the fast lane with a four-gear bike in *Mach Rider*

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	6	FUN FACTOR	8
ACE RATING 636			

NINTENDO

MACH RIDER

Hell on two wheels with NINTENDO

makes bike and rider explode into little jigsaw squares. There is a choice of challenges: combat, endurance or a solo track, and even a track designed by the player.

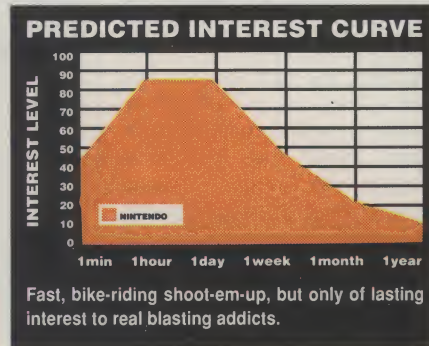
In combat mode, points are scored for negotiating the track and offing as many of the opposition as possible without getting waxed yourself. There are two methods of attack: one involves using the twin, nose-mounted cannons on the bike, while the other technique means pushing a trike off the track until it smashes into an oil drum.

Endurance mode just involves covering the length of the track inside a time limit, slightly tight in most cases, which only allows one or two crashes and full-speed riding is called for if you want to get to the end in one piece.

Control of the bike utilises the paddle's up and down arrows to change gear, left and right to steer and the A and B buttons to accelerate and fire respectively. It's a very fast game, and although *Mach Rider*, with its fluorescent green background, doesn't promise much the first time you boot it, the play is so addictive that you'll suddenly wake up one day with a full

beard and realise you just spent six months playing it and your dinner's burnt.

Once you get over the initial embarrassment caused by crashing into everything, precise control comes quite easily, and this is due to a certain amount of help from the computer. It leans you into the bends and doesn't overreact when you do. It may not sustain interest after you've got well up in the levels, but designing your own tracks will take up time in the future.



PRO WRESTLING

NINTENDO pulls yer ears off

AS Bernard Cribbins would say, "It's just like the real thing!" And he'd be right too, that wacky little wumbler, because *Pro Wrestling* is just one step away from smelly armpits and old grannies shouting "PULL 'IS EARS OFF!". Admittedly this isn't the English concept of what wrestling is all about, as there's a bit more actual bodily harm in this Americanised game. English wrestling is a gentle theatrical sport where skilled athletes throw each other around the ring and the audience works off its aggression by yelling its lungs out and stamping the place down.

In America there's a bit more bloodshed, it would seem, as in *Pro Wrestling* you punch, savagely kick and fling your opponent out of the ring, stamp on his neck and whirl him around your head by his groin. Well actually, if



Nintendo - punching, kicking, gripping by the goolies and stamping on your opponent's head are all fair game when you're *Pro Wrestling*

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	2
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	8
ACE RATING 794			

you play the console, it's the computerised player who does all these things to you. Forget three falls and a submission. Try a trip down the quack's in a minibus with a blue light on the top.

There isn't much in the instruction book about how players are supposed to deck their

NOVELTIES...



No wonder you're nicknamed Little Mac (if you were Big Mac you'd be a hamburger). Here you're up against your first opponent (Piston Honda) on the World Circuit and you don't seem to be doing too well.

round results in a technical knockout. If neither boxer is KO'd, the three-round bout is awarded to the contestant who gained the most points during the fight.

Landing hits is not straightforward – only the weakest fighters relax their guard repeatedly. Little Mac can only keep punching for so long – a small heart icon at the top left of the screen shows how many punches he can afford to waste – if one of his punches is blocked, the number by the heart decreases by one. If he is hit, three hearts disappear and when all the hearts have run out, Mac can't fight back until some more hearts have been earned by dodging or blocking punches.

Punch Out! is not meant to be a serious boxing simulation, it's just a fun beat-em-up that's tough enough and enjoyable enough to keep you playing for quite some time.

● Andy Smith

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	6	FUN FACTOR	8
ACE RATING 792			

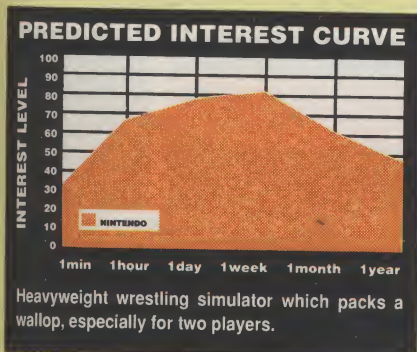
MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT!

Break some heads, NINTENDO style

opponent (be it a human second player or the computer) except that you can slap the buttons and the paddle until you get some stick in for yourself. There is however a huge range of different moves available once you've learned how – about 23 according to the paperwork! That's quite a lot, really, and it all adds to the realism quotient of the game. The best bit is where you throw the bloke out of the ring, dive out of the ring while he's still down, stamp on his head, and leap back in the ring again. That way he stays out of the ring for the 20 second limit, and you win the bout.

Although it's a bit hard, this is fun. Played as a two player game it's loads of laffs.

● Phil South

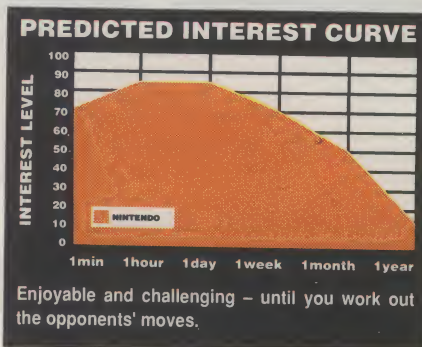


FRANK Bruno may be due to fight Mike Tyson 'real soon now', but if you can't wait for the 'real thing, you could always try stepping in for Frank – on the Nintendo.

As Little Mac, you're after Mike's crown, but before you get a chance to slug it out with the Heavyweight Champion of the World, Mac has to prove himself. That means starting at the bottom of the Minor League and winning promotion by defeating three other boxers. In the Major League four more boxers need to be beaten before Mac gets into the World League, where he has a chance to box his way to the finale with Mike Tyson.

The moves available are basic – dodge (to the left or right), guard, duck and punch (to the left, right, head or body). The idea is to land enough hits on the other guy in the ring, knock him down and, hopefully, out. Remember to avoid getting slugged yourself.

A stamina meter at the top of the screen shows how much energy the fighter has left. When it reaches zero, the boxer hits the canvas – three falls in one three-minute



The Nintendo console.
After a poor start last year it's now poised to give the Sega a run for its money.



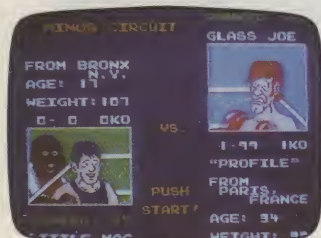
**MIKE TYSON: UNHURT, UNDEFEATED,
UNDISPUTED HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD.**

HE'S TOUGH. HE'S MEAN. AND HE'S WAITING FOR YOU!

OK now listen kid, and listen good. You've laid out ten opponents to get here today. If you pull this off you'll be Heavyweight Champion of the World.

Yeh, I know it's Mike Tyson sitting in the other corner. But you got the skill, the strength and the stamina. So just go in there, kid. Weave, dodge, jab; keep your guard up and your mind on that title.

And remember, this is Nintendo, right? So you might get beat, but you won't get hurt.



1. You're Little Mac and your first opponent is Glass Joe.

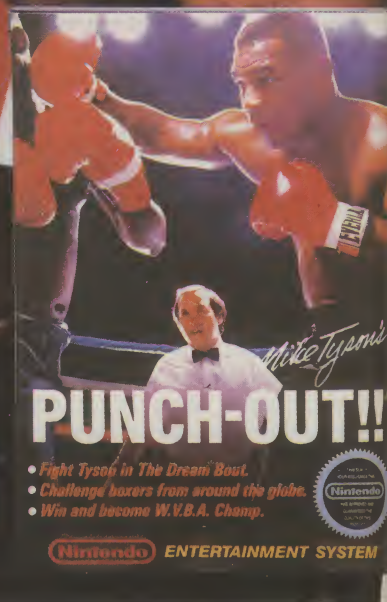


2. The bell's gone. Now it's up to you.



3. Go for it!

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH-OUT!!



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The Union army moves in for an attack on Lee's strung out Confederacy troops at Antietam. Try commanding the Confederate troops and see if you can survive the overwhelming odds.

ONE year in the fast-moving software business is indeed a long time. Still, that's how long UMS has been available, and it's only now that extra scenario disks have started to appear.

Two separate scenario disks are currently available, and they load into the main program to re-create famous battles – from the Vietnam War and American Civil War respectively. The American Civil War disk contains the battles of Shiloh, Antietam and Chattanooga. The Chattanooga scenario is split into two battles, loaded individually, that each deal with one day. Chattanooga 1, the main battle, deals with the conflict on November 25th 1863 – the Assault on Missionary Ridge – while Chattanooga 2 covers the preliminary engagement that took place on November 24th 1863.

As the main UMS program comes complete with the battle of Gettysburg (amongst others), the American Civil War scenario disk will come as no surprise to anyone who is familiar with the original package.

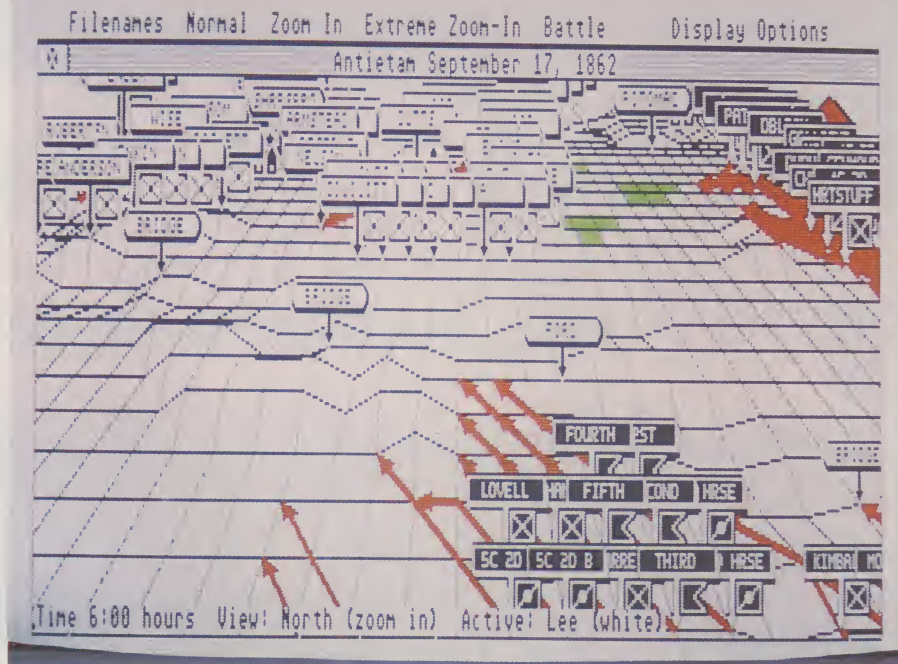
Shiloh was a great victory for the Union army under Grant after several earlier shock defeats at the hands of the Confederates. Antietam was a hard-fought battle that the Union troops finally won, though Lee's Confederacy troops performed magnificently considering they were stuck behind the enemy lines, hemmed in with a large river to their rear – not only outnumbered three to one, but with their forces spread over almost 20 miles!

Chattanooga was fought over three days, with the Union army taking the eastern slope of Missionary Ridge by the evening of 24th November before capturing the rest of the ridge the next day. The Confederate army suffered a severe beating at Chattanooga, after which the number of Confederate prisoners outnumbered Union dead by over five to one.

The Vietnam disk contains three scenarios from the battles of Dak To in 1967/68 in which the Americans were fighting the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) – uniformed regulars equipped with automatic weapons and mortars, rather than the popularly-imagined Viet Cong peasant soldiers clad in black pyjamas.

In the battle for Hill 823 the NVA hit the Americans hard with sniper, mortar and grenade attacks. The Americans finally took the hill but suffered substantial losses. The second scenario on the disk is set just north of Hill 823 on the slopes of Ngoh Kam Leat, where an understrength US unit wandered into a heavily-fortified enemy position. Several other companies went to the beleaguered unit's aid eventually reinforcing it before nightfall, when the NVA disappeared. Hill 875 was another hard-fought US victory, where the NVA inflicted heavy losses on the American forces from their hidden bunker complexes even though the Americans had shelled them for hours on end – at one point the Americans were even shelling their own units during the battle.

The Vietnam scenarios are interesting not only because of the highly tactical nature of the battles, but because of the introduction of



UMS

THE OPTIONS WIDEN...

RAINBIRD enters a new battle scenario

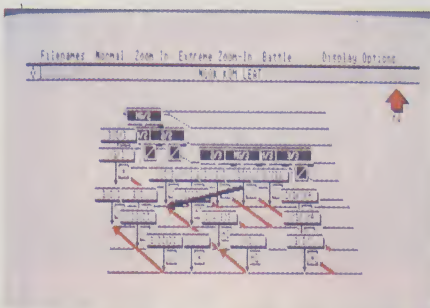
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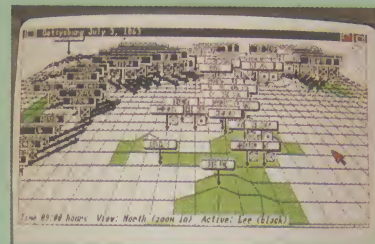
Like the battles provided with the main program, you can alter the terrain and the forces to your heart's content. You can even take terrains and armies from the scenario disks and mix them with the original ones. How would William the Conqueror have fared against a handful of grunts armed with automatic weapons and supported by 155mm Howitzers? The answer is easy to discover, try it out and see for yourself...

● Andrew Smith

NVA machine gunners open on an American unit from their heavily fortified positions. The Americans are trying to reach a struggling unit that wandered into enemy territory.



UMS AMIGA



Amiga UMS – note the movement line colour has changed from red to black.

Coming 'real soon now' is the Amiga version of the original UMS program. The two-disk package has all the features offered in the ST original – the first disk contains the main program along with the same five scenarios that come with the ST version (extra scenario disks for the Amiga are to follow). The second disk contains the program to edit the scenarios, armies and maps. Extra features included for the Amiga version are: a line of sight option, the ability to change the colours to workbench colours, and battle sounds – this last option is only available to people who own a machine with more than 512K of memory though. £24.95, Out Now.

BARBARIAN II

THE DUNGEON OF DRAX



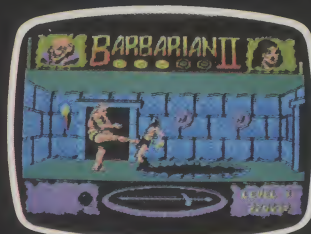
Spectrum Version



Atari ST Version



C64 Version



C64/128 (cassette and disk), Atari ST, Spectrum 48K and 128K (cassette and disk), Amstrad CPC (cassette and disk), Amiga, PC compatible. Check for availability of individual formats.

PALACE

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PACMANIA

GRANDSLAM go a-gobbling

ATARI ST VERSION

The display is much smaller but otherwise the graphics are up to scratch. Sound effects lose out as compared to the Amiga, but they're still good.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 2
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 9
ACE RATING 727

AMIGA VERSION

Very impressive graphics – filling the whole screen and scrolling smoothly. The sound effects, too, are excellent.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 2
AUDIO 7 FUN FACTOR 9
ACE RATING 775

ARCADE ACCURACY



Very close indeed, capturing the look and feel of the coin-op version.

COIN OP SCORE 9

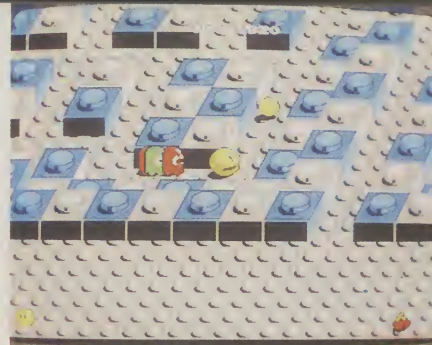
MUNCHING dots is an age-old hobby of computer owners which became popular again when this hit the arcades. To turn a classic old game into a popular new one, all you have to do is view the maze from a 3D perspective, make Pacman jump and change the mazes – easy.

The basic principle is the same as ever – clear a maze of dots by charging around eating them. While trying to do that you'll be pursued by a posse of ghosts. Help is at hand from power pills strategically placed around the maze – for a short time they allow you to turn the tables and munch the ghosts.

This incredibly simplistic game style has

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Amiga – look at that lovely big display. It's easier to tell what's going on than on the ST version.

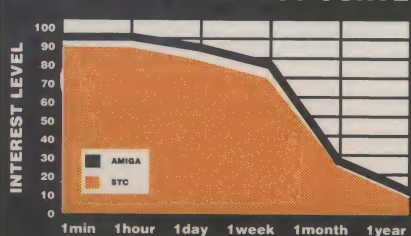
been augmented by awarding Pacman the ability to jump. No longer is there the frustration of getting trapped in corners, because you can bounce out of trouble.

The drawback with this graphic style is that only part of the maze, can be viewed on screen so it's impossible to know what's going on elsewhere in the maze but the 3D view does add a welcome, fresh perspective to the action.

It may not be very original but there's no arguing with its addictive qualities.

● Bob Wade

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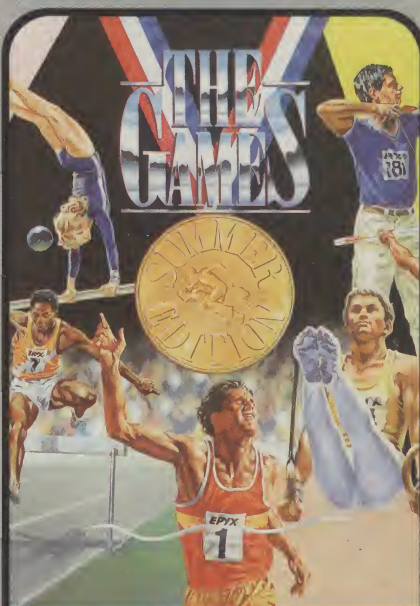
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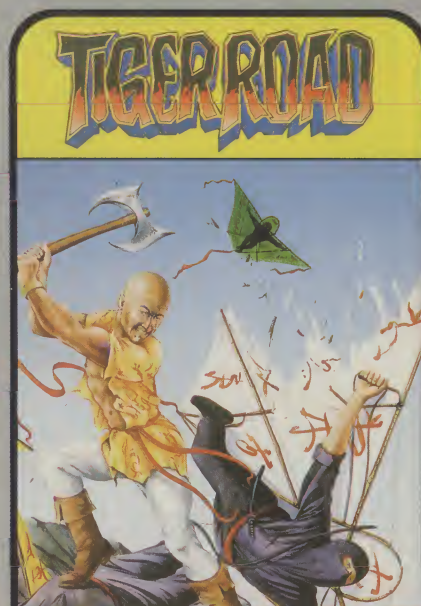
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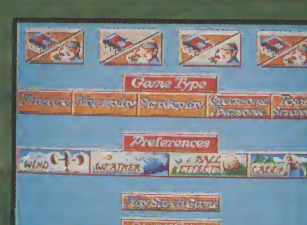
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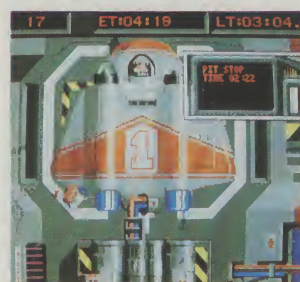
SUPPLEMENT

Welcome to Screen Test Supplement, the start of a whole new section within the magazine.

As this is the Christmas Special, we've crammed in extra pages of Tricks 'N' Tactics, and persuaded Phil South to provide his definitive run-down on the compilation scene this year. The budget round-up which accompanies the compilations overview will expand next year, when we'll be taking a monthly look at what is bubbling up from the world of the cheapie game.

The Screen Test Supplement will play host to Updates, as of next issue. And with the arrival of two new staffers, ACE will be able to provide the ultimate version update service. In Supplement, we'll be keeping you posted on all the updates, as they happen.

Look out for future developments in the Screen Test Supplement in 1989, and welcome to a new section in ACE!



BG

BUDGET GAMES

MASTERTRONIC

Cheapy supremo Mastertronic is launching something of an assault on the budget market this yule, with a fair selection of corking little numbers springing gaily from its various labels. Mad X has the 8-bit releases of *Rockford* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99), the Arcadia coin-op and Melbourne House 16-bit release. *Rockford* was adapted from a very popular game called *Boulder Dash*, which was brilliant on the C64 and arrived later on the Speccy about two years ago, where you dig your way through



soil, collecting gems, and try not to drop boulders on your head. A bit like life in the ACE office now I come to think of it. On the Mastertronic own brand label, a number of interesting things have emerged. *Get Dexter* (ST; £14.99) was an Info-games release, and a darling little 3D arcade adventure not unlike *Fairlight* or *Inside Outing*. You walk around a house manipulating objects to discover the dark secret. Sounds a bit like a chocolate advert to me. Very popular at the time, though. Also out now are *Majik* (Spec and C64; £1.99cs), *Sidewinder* (PC; £9.99cs) and a brand new



WE WISH YOU A... CHEAPY CHRISTMAS

Buying or receiving games as presents at this time of year used to be a hazardous process. "What cheap rubbish are they going to push on me this time?" sort of thing. But getting on the business end of some rather toothsome games is becoming cheaper, as many games have "sold through" (as they say in the video trade) to budget, increasing numbers of compilations are available containing ex-chart toppers, and more and more 16-bit budget games hit the stores. Phil South, the well known hard-nosed journalist, delves into what look to be the really good deals over the festive season, and gives us his nosy opinion...

It's quite curious how the software industry set the tone for the video revolution. The idea of budget titles was snapped up by certain smart video company bosses and the 'under-a-tenner' tape was born. But now it's come full circle and games manufacturers have seen the value of 'sell through' video. When a film has completed its main run in the cinemas it comes out on video for about 70-80 quid. A couple of months later it may well have a 'sale' price of something nearer £25 slapped on it. Finally, after it has fulfilled its 'window' at the video libraries, they rebox it and push it out for a tenner or so. Brilliant for everyone. You get a good deal, and the film companies use the income to make more films.

Now this might sound irrelevant to you as a buyer of games, but now the budget world of games is starting to creak at the seams with last year's gigagames. It's true, and it's a brilliant state of affairs. Not only do you get primo quality games for a couple of quid, but the companies who made them keep producing games for you to play in future. (On account of not going out of business!) The other noticeable thing about the year's bumper business season (you probably know it as Christmas) is the number of high quality 16-bit games which are starting to appear. Young programmers have learned how to tame the 16-bit workhorses and are rapidly cranking out as many cheap and cheerful shoot-em-ups as the average user can handle.

These trends are a good thing, especially this re-

lease craze. The games player gets first class software for a budget price, and this is good news, particularly for the first timer who has recently bought a Spectrum or a new CBM 64C and just wasn't around for the originals. People who 'collected' games - okay, STOLE them through copyright infringement - will walk out and buy legit copies of their faves just to really OWN one. And people who couldn't afford to buy a lot of games before can now catch up on the ones they missed.

So let's have a look at what's hot and what's not in the festive season - all the compilations and budget titles your little heart desires.

ELITE

FRANK BRUNO'S BIG BOX

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £17.99dk, C64 disk £14.99)

FISTS AND THROTTLES

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)

Chief compilation station in the late eighties has to be Elite. It seems to us that it was the first firm to bring out a blockbusting compilation. Yup, leave anything lying around and they'll bung it on a tape with loads of

other big games. Literally anything that's not nailed down.

Take **Frank Bruno's Big Box** for example. The names sound familiar, and why not? they've been on Elite compo before, especially *Batty* and *Battleships*, and *Scooby Doo* and *1942* were already on one of its Hit Pak collections. (Who us? The same as Hit Pak? Nahhhhh!!!!) Featured games on Frankie's Box are *Frank Bruno's Boxing*, *Commando*, *Scooby Doo*, *Ghosts'N'Goblins*, *Batty*, *1942*, *Airwolf*, *Bomb Jack*, *Saboteur* and *Battleships*. That's 10 originally full-priced games at 13 quid! The games haven't worn much with age. Look at *Batty*, for instance. Even on the Spectrum it's one of the best *Arkanoid* clones ever, and in a lot of ways more addictive. *Battleships* you may have seen reviewed in a couple of magazines at the time it was supposed to come out, but it never did. Elite's excuse was that it wasn't up to scratch, but how it levels that with the fact that the mags all gave it full marks I don't know. It's a reworking of the battleships game you play with pen and paper. You fire at the squares of a grid trying to guess where your opponent has placed his ships, you know the one! (Incidentally, if you see an Amiga version of this game, check it out as it's the best one of the lot!) Of the other games *1942*, *Bomb Jack*, *Ghosts'N'Goblins*, and *Commando* are fine examples of Elite's ability to spot a good coin-op license when it sees one. All four are not bad at all, although I particularly



recommend *Bomb Jack* on the Speccy, and *Ghosts'N'Goblins* on the C64. These two get my vote as past favourite games which I'd gladly play now.

Fists And Throttles isn't, as you might have thought, a purebred beat-em-up compilation, as the throttles mentioned are those on a car or bike rather than making people gargle by squeezing their necks. This is a really top flight compilation, containing *Ikari Warriors*, *Thundercats*, *Buggy Boy*, *Dragon's Lair* and *Enduro Racer*. Four coin-op conversions on this one, 900+ rated in ACE at the time, one of which is an ex-Activision release. *Thundercats* was also rated highly (931) and rightly so. *T'Cats* was a superb slice'n'dice game produced by star Elite contractors Roy and Greg at Gargoyle Games, who are well known for their quality gameplays and graphics. *Buggy Boy* was one of the most original driving games, and unlike so many titles there isn't much to choose between formats, although I suspect the C64 version would win by a nose.

US GOLD

GIANTS

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £19.99dk, C64 disk £14.99)

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £24.99cs and £29.99dk)

AMIGA GOLD HITS

(Amiga only; £24.99dk)

Let's face it, if anybody's got a fair amount of good product to offer in a compilation, it's US Gold. A number of Christmas No. 1's under its belt, for sure, and **Giants** has most of them. This again is choc-a-bloc with coin-ops, like *Gauntlet*, *Rolling Thunder*, *720* and *OutRun*, the only fly in the ointment being *California Games*. This was hailed as the worst game of all time on certain formats, and just plain vanilla on most others. But the other crucial blockbusters in the package more than make up for CG's complete lack of lustre.

Gauntlet must be one of the best-loved games of all time, in the arcades AND on the small screen. The computer version broke all sales records, and a hail of clones ensued, surely the highest honour for any computer game (imitation being the sincerest, if unwelcome, form of flattery!). *720* and *Rolling Thunder* had their moments, and to some the Spectrum versions were the best players, oddly enough, but by far the hottest property of all time in the software biz is *OutRun*. Although US Gold is attempting the same degree of hype and build up with this year's Sega licence, *Thunder Blade* (they might succeed, and why not?), nothing can really match the excitement of last year's *OutRun* fever. EVERYONE wanted the game, and most of them bought it. I have a sneaking suspicion that this isn't the last we'll see of it either. US Gold spent too much money on it to let it just die away. I feel a budget release coming on before it finally croaks.

History In The Making is the most extraordinary compilation; featuring an incredible 15 games. The collection purports to be a potted history of the great label. What it is in fact is a REALLY good excuse to flog off almost every success it has had, persuading almost everyone with a computer to fork out huge wads of cash. It has got some impressive titles on it: *Leaderboard*, *Express Raider*, *Impossible Mission*, *Super Cycle*, *Gauntlet*, *Beach Head*, *Beach Head II*, *Infiltrator*, *Kung Fu Masters*, *Spy Hunters*, *Road Runner*, *Bruce Lee*, *Goonies*, *World Games*, and *Raid*. Some of these are a bit creaky in the light of today's widespread sophistication, but for the most part they're still playable. And some of them are complete stunners; *Impossible Mission* remains an all-time favourite of mine, as do *Leaderboard* and the *Beach Head* twins. But there are also some unexpected pleasures, like *Spy Hunter*, which is an early vertically scrolling shoot-em-up, based on a coin-op I believe. *Spy Hunter*, although a bit of a throwback technically, is brilliant fun to play and, for those of us who vaguely remember it the first time around, a nostalgic experience.

Your basic Amiga nut could do severely worse than try a go at **Amiga Gold Hits**. *Bionic Commandos*, *Rolling Thunder*, *Jinks* and *Leaderboard*... AGAIN! For my money the good feature about this one is the inclusion of *Rolling Thunder*, one of my favourite games in the sloty arcade, and the Amiga conversion being one of the most accurate in existence, if a little slow at times. There isn't really the space to look at

BG... home-grown thingy called *Star Farce* (Spec;

£1.99cs), described by Andy 'Flathead' Wright as "a budget shoot-em-up hit for Christmas", but then again he would, as it's his baby.

But by far the best stuff to be had from Mastertronic is on the Ricochet label. *Little Computer People* (Amiga; £14.99dk) was originally an Activision release, the idea being that you have a little person living in your computer whom you feed and entertain to keep him alive. Well weird, but enormous laffs. *Jet Set Willy* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £1.99cs) must be the longest running game in the history of computing. This was the second game I ever bought, and must be the one I've played most over the years, if you took all the sessions and laid them end to end. *Rock-N'Bolt* and *X15 Alpha Mission* (both C64; £1.99cs) are a pair of Activision refugees which came



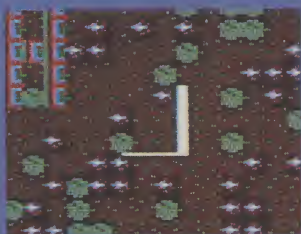
out around two years ago, in what I believe was Activision's golden era. Remember *Ghostbusters* and *Web Dimension*? And *Mindshadow* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £1.99. Amiga and ST; £14.99dk) too! This was state of the art adventure stuff – well, at the time anyway. We've come on a bit since then. And finally *Knightmare* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £1.99) last year's release based on the slightly odd TV maze series.

ZEPPELIN

This newcomer to the budget game, known to its friends as *Dirigiblesoft*, is positively over-



BG... flowing with new products. They have *Las Vegas Casino* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99) featuring Baccarat,



Craps, Roulette and Blackjack. *Jokey Wilson's Dart Challenge* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99) includes round the clock, straight competition and playing against a human player. Unfortunately there are no beer tokens or strap-on belly included in the game, so you'll have to supply those. The only other £2.99 releases on its catalogue are the plan view, scrolling *Rally Simulator* (Spec C64 and Ams; £2.99), *Para Assault Course* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99) and *Zybex* (Spec; £2.99). For £1.99 on C64 only, they have *Terrafighter* and *Master Blaster* plus *Battle-tank Simulator* on the Spec and Amstrad. The other title which could bear some scrutiny, if only for the name, is *Bionic Ninja* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £1.99). Really, the mild boggles.

RACK-IT

Hewson's Rack-It label has scored a good few points by re-running FTL's back catalogue, with the scrolling shoot-em-up *Lightforce*, the aquatic arcade/adventure *Hydrofool*, plus the highly original beat-em-up *Shockway Rider*. All these titles are Spectrum C64 and Amstrad, and should be chunked out at £2.99. *Lightforce* was something of a celebrity on the Spectrum, as it was one of the first Spectrum games which had full colour sprites and backgrounds. (OK so *Dark Sceptre* had them, and big sprites too,



but can YOU stay awake long enough to see them?) *Hydrofool* was one of the better games that Roy and Greg did, and as an iso-

all the US Gold compilations, and there are hundreds of them, but check out the listings at the end for details of all of them.

OCEAN IMAGINE

THE IN CROWD

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.95cs)

5 STAR

(ST only; £24.95dk)



TAITO COIN-OP HITS

(Spec, C64, Ams; £12.95cs and £17.95dk)

Two from the Ocean label and one from the once proud software house, now mere cypher label, Imagine. One of the very hottest compilations out now is *The In Crowd*, which apart from being an ancient and excellent Brian Ferry tune is also Ocean's compilation flagship this year. Firstly there's *Barbarian* (Maria's chubbies version), *Crazy Cars*, *Karnov*, *Gryzor*, *Predator*, *Combat School*, *Target: Renegade*, and *Platoon*. A good 80 quid's worth of games just one year ago, and now you can get them for £13! My personal favourite on this list must be *Target: Renegade*, the best beat-em-up I've ever played, and the only game I ever stayed up all night trying to beat on the C64. *Platoon* I found a bit disappointing, but having to produce a war game which doesn't glorify war is a bit of a tough brief, so it's only to be expected I suppose.

5 Star is a compilation which has appeared on other formats, but only now have ST games been out long enough to bundle them. *Barbarian* (once again the Palace or Maria Whittaker version), *Crazy Cars*, *Enduro Racer*, *Wizball*, and *Rampage*. These are really hot properties too, but strangely only one is an Ocean game! The others are by Palace, Titus (no jokes please!) and a pair of Activisions, in that order.



But you see there is a new rule in the compilation game (Awright my loves?) and that is: it doesn't even have to be your own games, as long as they sold moderately well, then they're fair game, see?

Predictably enough, *Barbarian* sold huge mounds of copies, mainly, it's thought, due to Maria's huge mounds on the cover. Although it was received with a certain amount of critical disappointment, the game ran and ran in the charts, and hints and tips were flying back and forth to mags for months afterwards. Of the other games on **5 Star**, the only slightly dubious title is *Rampage*. I dunno - some people really liked this coin-op jobby, but I can't say it ever really grabbed me. Best game on this one has to be *Enduro Racer*, but then again I like road racing games so that was inevitable.

Taito has had its fair share of coin-op conversions, and to prove it Imagine has whacked a load of them on one tape, including *Rastan*, *Slap Fight*, *Renegade*, *Arkanoid*, *Flying Shark*, *Arkanoid II: Revenge Of Doh*, *Bubble Bobble* and the *Legend Of Kage*. This collection gets the vote as second best buy, on account of being choc-a-bloc with chart toppers, none of which have really aged at all - they still play better than a lot of current releases. There isn't much to choose between formats either, with the Spectrum versions being as fast and playable as the more colourful Commodore and Amstrad programs. *Bubble Bobble*, rated 958 in Issue 1 of *ACE* by the way, was a wacky old game in the arcades, and I would have to admit to rating this over all the more obvious hits on the tape as the most addictive by far.

BEAU JOLLY

SUPREME CHALLENGE

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.95cs and £16.95dk)

COMPUTER HITS

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.95cs and £16.95dk. ST and Amiga soon)

Taking its lead from the record biz, Beau Jolly has been doing the Now That's What I Call Software game for some time. While not actually producing any software, they are adept at blagging other companies to let them produce compilations on their behalf. And so **Supreme Challenge** contains *Elite*, *Tetris*, *Starglider*, *Sentinel*, and *ACE 2*, a very strong line-up indeed. If this doesn't qualify as the best games for the least money, then my nose is a carrot. Getting hold of just *Elite* and *Starglider* 8-bit versions would be a major coup in itself, but top that off with the maddeningly addictive *Tetris*, the incredible flight/combat sim *ACE 2*, and the mind-bending *Sentinel*, this is a world-beating compilation. Anyone who doesn't agree with this must be dead from the joystick up. If you don't buy any other 8-bit games this yuletide, buy this collection. *Sentinel* is pretty odd, but it has to be the most original game of the last year. With its unique 3D perspective and surreal landscapes, it rates with me as best game of this compilation. (Hey, that means it's the best game on the best compilation! Ohh.)

And to prove that I can get even more excited without exploding or needing the assistance of a box of man-size tissues, there's **Computer Hits**... Hmm, OK so not many utterly brilliant games on this one, but there are lots of 'em. On all formats there's *Enlightenment: Druid II*, *Ninja Hamster*, *Tarzan*, *Mega Apocalypse* and *Master Of The Nile*. On the

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BG... metric arcade adventure had huge mounds of things to recommend it – not least of which are the hilarious graphics and animation. Not only that but some really stunning puzzles. Highly recommended.

CODEMASTERS

Never without at least ten new titles a week, Those Darling Boys, aka Codemasters, have got a goodly wedge of stuff too. *International Rugby Simulator* (Spec, C64, Ams; £2.99. ST; £19.99dk) for a start, with some very splendid graphics on the ST, *Pro Ski Simulator* (Amiga only; £19.99dk) finally on the 16 blitter, *BMX Freestyle* (Spec and Ams; £2.99cs) a bit like *ATV Sim*, but with more things to do, *Ninja Massacre* (Ha ha ha ha... er Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99cs) as the ultimate Gauntlet clone, it sez here, the freshly renamed *SAS Combat Simulator* (Spec and Ams; £2.99cs), a yeti beat-em-up called *Bigfoot* (Spec and Ams; £2.99cs), *Skateboard Simulator* (Spec and Ams; £2.99cs) – of course, why didn't we think of that – and *Deathstalker* (Spec and Ams; £2.99cs) a super little arcade adventure of the slice'n'dice persuasion.

KIXX

A trio of ex-Gremlin and one US Gold releases – *Footballer Of The Year* (Spec, C64 and Ams;



£2.99cs), *Krakout* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99cs), *Way Of The Tiger* (Spec, C64, Ams, MSX, BBC and C16; £2.99cs) and finally and most significantly *Leaderboard* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £2.99cs)! Considering that you can buy *Leaderboard* on a number of compilations, check

C64 there's also *Traz*, *Samauri Warrior*, *Morpheus*, *Frightmare* and *Magnetron*. Spectrum versions carry copies of *Frightmare* and *Traz*, Amstrad versions have *Boggit*, *Activator* and *Endurance*, and both Spectrum and Amstrad versions contain extra added *Dark Sceptre* and *Catch 23*. OK, so I said they weren't all that stunning. They're good games, but standing alongside the *Supreme Challenge* they look pretty pale indeed.

GREMLIN GRAPHICS

10 GREAT GAMES

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)



SPACE ACE

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)

FLIGHT ACE

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £14.99cs and £17.99dk)

Big games, big compilations, that's fruity old Gremlin. It turns out that the company is re-releasing every game it ever made on three mega compilations. **10 Great Games** contains *Leaderboard*, *10th Frame*, *Last Mission*, *Rana Rama*, *Firelord* and *Fighter Pilot* on all formats. On the Speccy and Amstrad there's *Rocca*, *Impossaball*, *City Slicker* and *Dragonatorc*, and on the C64 there's *Rebounder*, *Iridis Alpha*, *Eagles* and *Alley Kat*. Something for everyone, I think you'll agree. I must declare a fondness for *Leaderboard* and Jeffy Minter's *Iridis Alpha* on the the 64, and *Impossaball* on the Spectrum – these make it worth checking out **10 Greats** on their own.

Space Ace is a collection of loosely Sci-fi based games like *Cybernoid*, *Northstar*, *Zynaps*, *Trantor*, *Exolon*, *Venom Strikes Back* and *Xevious*. *Trantor* is a pretty hot little number, not entirely removed from Probe's last job called *Savage*, I think you'll find! Fast and furious and worth a look. *Cybernoid*, *Zynaps* and *Exolon*'s reputations precede them, of course, and certainly guarantee good sales for this one.

Flight Ace is, as you'd expect, wriggling with flight sims, including *ACE*, *Spitfire 40*, *Air Traffic Control*, *Tomahawk*, *Strike Force Harrier* and *ATF*. Now then! *ATF* was a pretty amazing game, and rated huge mounds of points everywhere. It's a cross between a flight sim and an arcade game, with gripping graphics and an action-packed gameplay. You can skim the surface of the play area in the terrain-following mode, which is an exciting way of avoiding enemy radar, as any cruise missile will tell you. *Spitfire 40* was something of an award winner for its

graphics at the time, as I recall, and they are impressive, especially on the C64. Makes you want to grow a moustache and say 'Chocks away, Ginger' and stuff like that. Check it out, *Wing Commander*.

MASTERTRONIC

MEGAPLAY

(Spec, C64 and Ams; £9.99cs. BBC version to follow)

Unsurprisingly from the home of the Budget Burger, all the titles on the Mastertronic compilation are ex-budget games themselves, more of the £2.99 class than £1.99 as I recall. The games on the C64 version



are *Pipeline II*, *Agent X II*, *Rapid Fire*, *Cage Match*, *Street Beat* (previously called *Ghetto Blaster* or something, wasn't it?) and *Destructo*. Most of these games come from the pre-ACE days that time forgot, all that is except *Agent X II*, which in Issue 4 rated a 616. On the Spectrum and Amstrad it's *Agent X II*, *Destructo*, *Zub*, *Rasterscan*, *Curse Of Sherwood*, and *180*. A bit of a ho hum selection really, and apart from the impressive and amazingly programmed *Zub*, a couple of quid too expensive.

MIRROR SOFT

TRIAD

(ST, Amiga; £29.99dk)

A truly blockbusting trio of games here. If you didn't buy them the first time around, then you must now. *Starglider* was THE Amiga and ST game for a couple of years, and if you haven't heard of it you must have had your head in a bucket of sand for the last 18 months. After *Starglider* had made its impact and left to storm America, Cinemaware's *Defender Of The Crown* knocked the spots off of EVERYBODY'S boxer shorts, and was hailed as the perfect Amiga game. This is mostly due to the superbly drawn graphics, and owes nothing to the gameplay, which to my mind is just a little simplistic. Psygnosis' *Barbarian* was a peculiar little beat-em-up, which was also praised for its presentation, but gamewise it always struck me as

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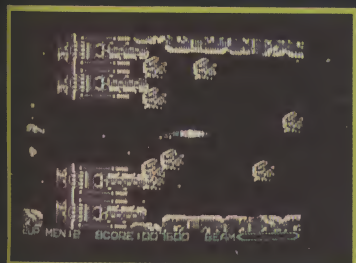
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Commodore 64 screen shots shown



Spectrum screen shots shown



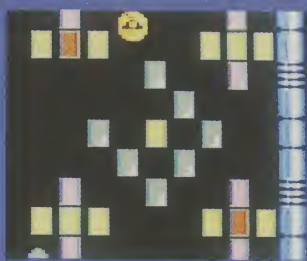
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BG... them out and see whether you'd like what it's teamed with. It is THE golf game, and if you don't have it, I suggest you avoid embarrassment by nipping



down the shop and getting it today. *Way of the Tiger* isn't bad at all, and rates with me as one of the more interesting martial arts games of the last two years. And let's face it, there have been a few quite dippy ones.

SILVERBIRD

Telecomsoft has a wedge of games that would choke a bison, not that I've tested this you understand. Firstly there's *International Speedway* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £1.99). This is a super race game which allows you to play with dirtbikes without having your neck broken, or being splattered from head to trainers in mud. You race against four other bikes and go through local competitions up to International level. *Motorcross Mania* (C64 only; £1.99), is a multiload race game which not only presents you with different hazards, but also gives you better and better bikes to choose from. *Scuba Kidz* (Spec, C64, Ams and MSX; £1.99), as well as being the 900,000th Telecomsoft release ending in a Z, is your search to rescue the nippers from the Evil Sea Lord's undersea cave. Kwar! There are eight treacherous, evil and cruel caves to navigate, and watch out for the nifty shark disguise! But the funniest release has to be *Billboard* (Spec, C64 and Ams; £1.99). Silverbird's great tradition of puzzle games, (*Huh? Ed*) puts you on a ladder on a billboard, piecing together puzzle pictures which have been split into bits, from 4 to 64 pieces depending on the level. It's your task to fit them all together again. Brill.



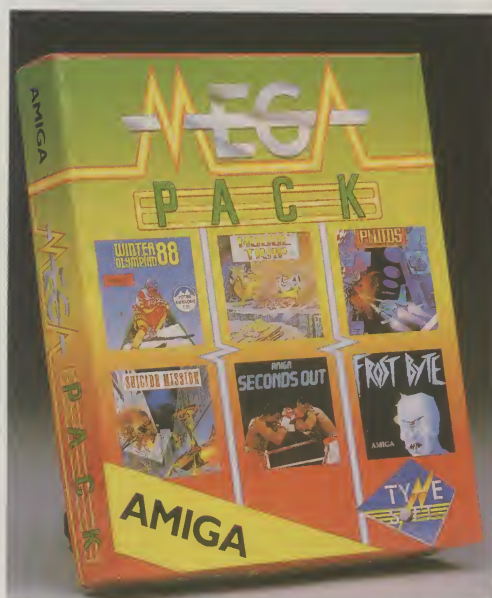
being repetitive. Having said that, we are talking some very ritzy looking games. If you like strategy games, then try before you buy is my advice. They do look very good on the monitor, and will certainly impress your 8-bit owning chums.

TYNESOFT

MEGAPACK

(ST and Amiga; £24.95dk)

One of the few other 16-bit compilations worth looking at is Tynesoft's festive collection, containing *Winter Olympiad*, *Mousetrap*, *Plutos*, *Seconds Out*, *Frost Byte*, and a previously unreleased game called *Suicide Mission*. On the ST the unreleased game is something called *Blood Fever*. *Winter Olympiad* didn't score over-well in the issue of *ACE* (around the 500-600 mark) but the graphics weren't bad at all. Although nothing different as a sports game, it will doubtless please fans of this genre.



COMPILATIONS AT A GLANCE

MASTERTRONIC

● **MEGAPLAY** (Spec, CBM, Ams. £9.99cs. Out soon on BBC.)
PIPELINE II, AGENT X II, RAPID FIRE, CAGE MATCH, STREET BEAT, DESTRUCTO

(On the Spectrum and Amstrad:)
AGENT X II, DESTRUCTO, ZUB, RASTERSCAN, CURSE OF SHERWOOD, and 180.)

US GOLD

● **GIANTS** (Spec, CBM, Ams. £12.99cs, £19.99dk. ex CBM £14.99dk.)
GAUNTLET, ROLLING THUNDER, CALIFORNIA GAMES, 720, OUTRUN

● **HISTORY IN THE MAKING** (CBM, Spec, Ams; £24.99cs, £29.99dk)
LEADERBOARD, EXPRESS RAIDER, IMPOSSIBLE MISSION, SUPER CYCLE, GAUNTLET, BEACH HEAD, BEACH HEAD II, INFILTRATOR, KUNG FU MASTERS, SPY HUNTER, ROAD RUNNER, BRUCE LEE, GOONIES, WORLD GAMES, RAID

● **AMIGA GOLD HITS** (Amiga only; £24.99dk)
BIONIC COMMANDOS, ROLLING THUNDER, JINKS, LEADERBOARD

● **SPORTSWORLD 88** (C64 only; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)
CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, 10th FRAME, HARBALL, LEADERBOARD, 4th & INCHES, SNOOKER and POOL, GO FOR GOLD, WATERPOLO

● **COMMAND PERFORMANCE** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)
MERCENARY, HARBALL, ARMAGEDON MAN, LEVIATHAN, BOBSLEIGH, SHACKLED, TRANTOR, CHOLO, XENO, 10th FRAME

● **TASTE OF AMERICA** (C64 only; £9.99cs)
SIDE ARMS, SOLOMON'S KEY, WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD, SUPER CYCLE

● **GO CRAZY** (Spec, C64 and Ams;

£14.99cs and £17.99dk)
SHACKLED, BAD CAT, JINKS, SIDEARMS, DESOLATOR, BEDLAM (Spectrum version contains: MISSION ELEVATOR, THUNDERCEPTOR, FAST'N'FURIOUS, DESOLATOR, SIDEARMS and SHACKLED)

● **EPYX ON PC II** (PC only; £19.99dk. 3.5" version £24.99dk)
WORLD GAMES, IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II, STREET SPORTS BASKETBALL

ACTIVE DISTRIBUTION

● **EAS COMPILATION** (Amiga only; 2 disks £9.95dk)
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MIRRORSOFT

● **TRIAD** (ST, Amiga; £29.99dk)
STARGLIDER, DEFENDER OF THE CROWN, BARBARIAN (US)

GREMLIN GRAPHICS

● **10 GREAT GAMES** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)
LEADERBOARD, 10th FRAME, LAST MISSION, RANA RAMA, FIRELORD (on all formats); ROCCA, IMPOSSABALL, CITY SLICKER, DRAGONTORC (on the Spectrum and Amstrad); REBOUNDER, IRIDIS ALPHA, EAGLES, ALLEY KAT (On the 64)

● **SPACE ACE** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)
CYBERNOID, NORTHSTAR, ZYNAPS, TRANTOR, EXOLON, VENOM STRIKES BACK, XEVIOUS

● **FLIGHT ACE** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £14.99cs and £17.99dk)
ACE, SPITFIRE 40, AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL, TOMAHAWK, STRIKE FORCE HARRIER, ATF

● **10 MEGA GAMES** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.99cs and £14.99dk)
CYBERNOID, DEFLEKTOR, TOUR DE FORCE, MASK II, BLOOD BROTHERS,

HERCULES, NORTHSTAR, TRIAXOS, BLOOD VALLEY, MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

OCEAN/IMAGINE

● **THE IN CROWD** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.95cs)
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● **5 STAR** (ST £24.95)
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● **TAITO COIN-OP HITS** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.95cs and £17.95dk)
RASTAN, SLAP FIGHT, RENEGADE, ARKANOID, FLYING SHARK, REVENGE OF DOH: ARKANOID II, BUBBLE BOBBLE, LEGEND OF KAGE

ELITE

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FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING, COMMANDO, SCOOPY DOO, GHOSTS'N'GOBLINS, BATTY, 1942, AIRWOLF, BOMB JACK, SABOTEUR, BATTLESHIPS

● **FISTS AND THROTTLES** (Spec, CBM, Ams. £12.99cs, £14.99dk)
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● **SUPREME CHALLENGE** (Spec, C64 and Ams; £12.95cs and £16.95dk)
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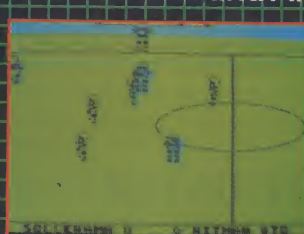


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Okay, it's the last issue of 1988, so it's time to do something a little special. We had a chat with the man who wrote POWERDROME, and as a result can bring some performance-improving tips from the author himself. Baffled by BOMBUZAL? Tony Crowther, designer of more than a few of the tortuous levels, gives part of the inside story on defusing explosives, with a few tips thrown in by the man in the Mirrorsoft office who gets away with spending most of his day in front of Bombuzal: Mark Jordan.

And to get into the New Year with a bang, we've decided to give away £150 of software to the sender of Tip of the Month, starting with the January Issue. Five more tipsters stand a chance of collecting the game of their choice every month too – so in between dealing with the turkey and mince pies this year, get going! Happy Christmas, and have a Tippy New Year!

BOMBUZAL



■ Tony Crowther (above) and Mirrorsoft's Mark Jordan give us the benefit of their inside knowledge, in the form of a dozen quick hints...

An easy way to complete a level is to blow up all the bombs on the level first, and see which squares remain undamaged. These are the squares the player should aim to finish on.

Study the map of each level carefully before trying to complete the level.

When attempting to detonate a pulsing bomb, pick it up, as it is easier to see the bomb's size when it is held up.

Remember that when you are teleporting a droid, you are impervious to the effects of the monsters on the levels.

When teleporting from square to square you are invulnerable to explosions.



Switches have three phases: Phase 1=SET. Phase 2=ON. Phase 3=OFF. Phase 1 can never be reversed after a switch has been operated.

When teleporting, the explosions occur before you teleport, so if you're teleporting onto a mine, it will be destroyed before you get there, provided the square is in the blast radius and is riveted.

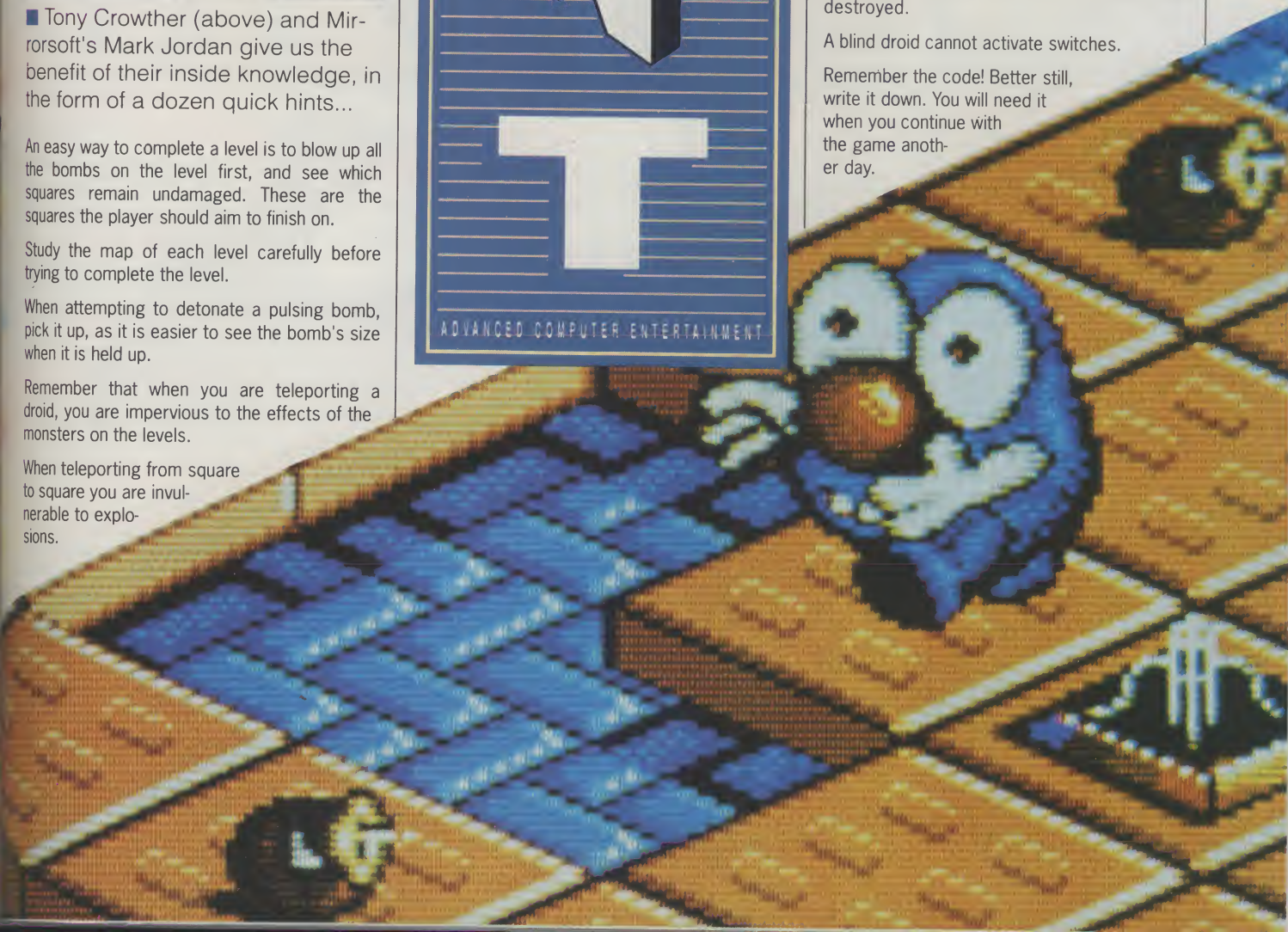
On the ST and Amiga versions of *Bombuzal* the mouse makes the game even more difficult and should only be used by experienced players.

When dealing with more than one nasty, try to kill them off as quickly as possible: use the dissolving squares and switches to make the squares disappear beneath them.

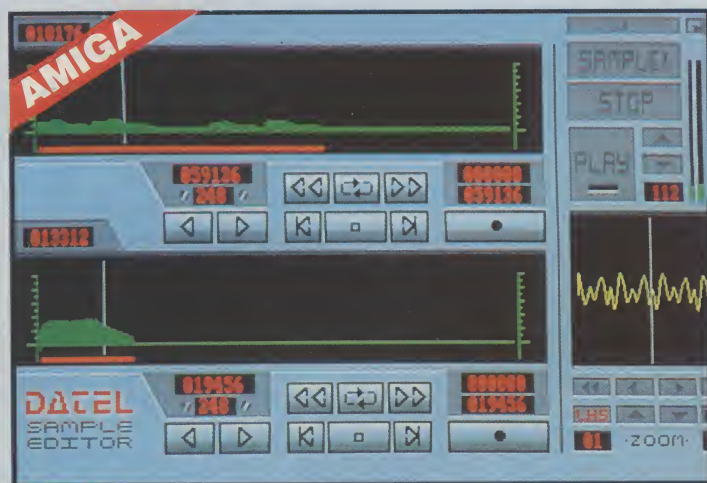
When using sighted droids you may activate switches, but when the bomb blows up the droid will die. Also, if you try to move the droid away from the bomb you will move when the bomb and droid have been destroyed.

A blind droid cannot activate switches.

Remember the code! Better still, write it down. You will need it when you continue with the game another day.



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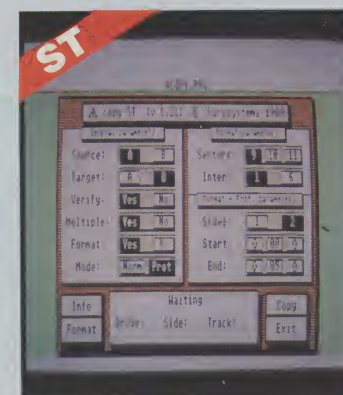
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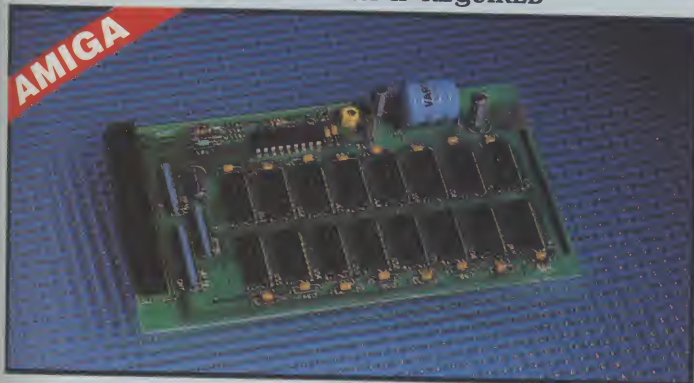
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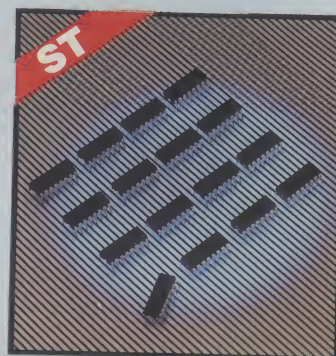
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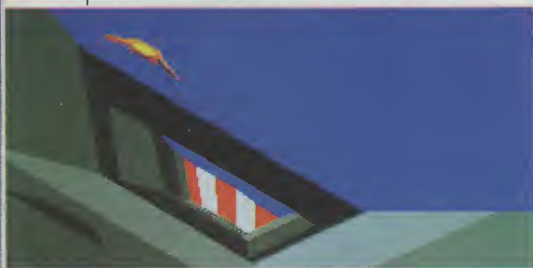
POWER

If anyone out there knows how to get the best out of **POWERDROME**, it is almost certainly the man who wrote it: Mike Powell. So if you're driving the Typhoon more like a Morris Minor at the moment, check out what Mike has to say, slip on those driving gloves, grab a joystick and see if you can better the Master's personal best lap timings...

FLYING YOUR TYPHOON

Powerdrome, more so than most race games, requires a certain amount of practice before you can play it well. When a player first starts, the mouse could well appear very sensitive. It has to be like this for the harder twisty tracks, where you might want to go from full left bank to full right in 1/10th of a second. The joystick is a little easier for beginners, but for precision and fast direction changes, you have to use the mouse.

First of all, scale down the elevator response on the tune-up screen. If you still find yourself smashing into every available hard surface, turn the y-lock option on in the pits. After maybe a quarter of an hour on the oval track you should be getting the hang of it, and can increase the sensitivity.



FAST CORNERING

To turn the Typhoon, all you do is bank over. However, this isn't the fastest possible turn rate. To achieve this, first of all get the craft flipped nearly at right angles, then pull back on the mouse, using your elevators effectively as a rudder.

Use the racing line. Just as on ground-based racing, the fastest line through a corner is from the outside of the track to the inside and back to the outside as the curve ends. In this way you straighten out the turn as much as possible. In three dimensions it is a little harder to do, but the principle is the same. When on an outside section of the track, fly as close as possible to the sky force field – not only is it less damaging than hitting the ground but the track is wider at that height.

Going into an underground section is one of the most difficult manoeuvres to get right in *Powerdrome*, but also one of the most satisfying when you can get it right. The fastest way is not to brake at all but to flip the racer on its back and pull back. Then roll through 180 degrees with the natural curve of the track and pull back again.

SAFE AFTERBURNING

You won't get a really fast lap without using afterburners. However, only use them when pointing straight or you could have a bad day. Overheating engines is a problem, mainly on the test oval with its four long straights, so keep an eye on the temperature gauges; if you blow an engine it cancels out any time you might have made up.

FILTER CHANGES

When a storm is brewing up, the decision must be made as to whether to go into the pits and change filters. Weigh up how many laps are left – do you need a fuel/repair stop anyway? You can take a chance and continue without changing, but the storm may be a lot longer than you thought.

FUEL USAGE

Try to judge which type of fuel to use depending on the track you're about to race on. If you're really good on that particular track, use



THE WAY TO

Premium for maximum speed. If it's one of your weaker tracks, though, use Economy as the extra speed will probably only make you crash more often. The race length matters too; on a short one a pit stop near the end of the race may mean the difference between first and last.

RACE TACTICS

The fastest way to enter the RoboPit is to scream down the pit lane and, timing it just right, cut the engines before you reach your pit. Alternatively, if you're going way too fast to slow down in time, smash into the nearest available wall.

DAMAGE REPAIR

If it's nearly the end of the race, don't bother to get repairs done, just try and limp round. If you have to go in the pits for fuel though, just changing the nosecone costs no extra time. Find out your lead time just before you go in, you then have an idea of what you can change.

RDROME



TO PLAY ACCORDING TO MIKE POWELL.

TRACK TIPS

Test Oval. No real secret to this one – just use as much afterburner as you can, short of trashing your engines.

My best lap: 11.24 secs

AntarCorp. Very narrow underground section, so try and stay in the middle of the track. Vertical

underground chicane can be taken flat out – just.

My best lap: 53.17 secs

Clorotek. Entry to underground section is difficult as it's just after a right curve. Use the flip upside down technique. The section from underground exit to start line should be flown with judicious use of afterburners.

My best lap: 38.35 secs

Otyaka. This darkened underground section is difficult at first, but not as hard as it seems when you know which way the track goes. After you come out onto the surface again, the section from the exit of the right-hand hairpin to the start can be taken flat out, but only if you get your line exactly right through the series of chicanes.

My best lap: 56.58 secs

Banzai. This is probably the hardest of the six tracks. Mono Standard fuel is usually the best choice here as it is difficult to use the extra speed of Nitra. Slow down to half speed for

the dip under the track as a crash here can cost a lot of time.

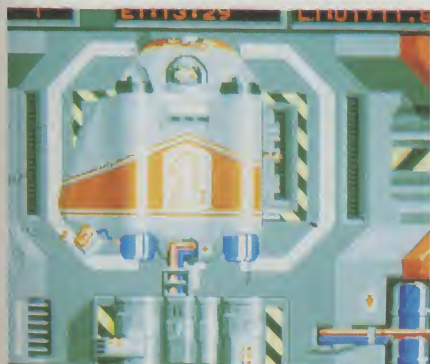
My best lap: 59.18 secs

Apocalyt. The very tight hairpin (third corner from the start) should be taken about 30% speed. Alternatively, if you're not too damaged already, scream straight into the corner and smash into the wall to lose the speed. The underground loop takes some practice. Use very gentle corrections on the mouse – if you crash here, it's difficult to build up speed again.

My best lap: 38.90 secs

DATALINK MODE

If you know someone with an ST, get together and play against them in Datalink Mode. For the satisfaction of beating someone you know it's worth the small cost of a cable. If one of you is a lot better than the other, you can introduce handicaps by, say, the fast one using the slowest fuel and no afterburners. If there's several of you, have a knockout competition.



LAST NINJA 2

■ To get things rolling, here's how to complete the first level on the Spectrum.

From the starting room, go behind the curtain and punch the wall box that flashes as you enter. Return to the first room and fall through the now open trap door. You should now see a key on the floor, take the key and exit. Leave the next screen by the bottom exit and on the following screen you'll find some shuriken in a box – take the shuriken.

Go through the gap in the wall and into the next room, where you'll see a knife juggler. Pass the juggler and go into the next room. Throw a shuriken at the man in this room and then take the map before climbing the wall bars and exiting by the left. Jump the gaps and pick up the pole and then jump back into the previous room. Walk backwards onto the wall bars and you will climb back down them, leave and go past the juggler again before leaving the next room by the right hand exit.

Go through the gap in the wall and enter the next room, throw a shuriken at the man and pick up the first half of the rice flail whilst in the women's toilets. Retrace your steps to



the gap in the wall and go into the next room. Throw a shuriken at the man and pick up the other half of the rice flail in the women's toilets again. Leave the room and pick up the hamburger at the hot dog stand. Leave by the top exit and you should be at the gate room. Go to the middle of the gate whilst holding the key and pick up, then go through the gate. Jump the river by using the boat (this needs practice!) and leave.

In the next room are some bees – avoid them and go up the winding path. When you get to the middle of the path, run and then jump onto the island. Go to the bushes and poke the boat with the stick and it should move away. Then move to the bottom edge of the island and run and jump back onto the path. Now cross the river by using the boat and leave the park. Now load in the second level.

■ Jason Richardson, Wincanton.

PLATOON

■ Here's a handy tip for ST owners.

Type in HAMBURGER – HILL when the title screen appears and the word 'CHEAT' appears below the programmers' names. Start the game and you'll find that pressing F2 takes you straight to the TNT. F3 takes you straight to the bridge and F4 takes you straight to the village.

■ Mark Bellwood, Morecambe.

WIN £150 WORTH OF SOFTWARE?

Bursting into 1989, we've suddenly got all generous. Throughout the year, we plan to hand out £150, yes £150 worth of software to the sender of each month's Top Tip. If you want to get a piece of the action, send in your tips, POKEs, maps or detailed playing guides, and do it now! We're not interested in second-hand tips, or detailed

guides on how to play games for the ZX80 – it's brand-new tips for the games in the last couple of issues that we're looking for. And remember, you may not win the top prize, but we're also giving five people the chance to own the game of their choice for their machine. Make sure you send us a list of the games you'd like to get if

your tip comes top of the pile – select titles from the last three issues to be sure that they are still available.

Send your contributions to the usual address:

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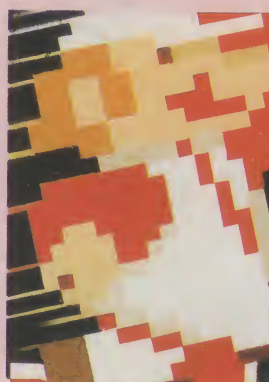
SUPER MARIO BROS

■ The classic Nintendo game has been around for quite a while, but do you know how to set off the fireworks? Or why you should destroy Super Mario? Read on...

THE WARP ZONES

There are three warp zones in SMB, the first is at the end of World 1-2. Take the elevator up and jump over to the top. Run to the right and you'll find a room containing three pipes – these lead to Worlds 2, 3 and 4. At the end of World 4-2, take the elevator to the top and run to the right where you'll find a warp zone leading to World 5. To get quickly to World 8 though, jump up in World 4-2 to make the invisible blocks appear. Get onto the blocks and hit a brick to make a vine appear. Climb the vine and run to the right while collecting coins. Then you'll come to the final warp zone that leads to Worlds 6, 7 and 8.

In World 4-2 there are other hidden blocks in



places that look empty at first. Stand on the blocks to get the 1-UP Mushroom, or other goodies.

The fireworks can be set off when you jump onto the pole at the end of each level. The secret of the fireworks lies in the last digit of the time indicator. Jump onto the pole when the number is

a one, three or six and the fireworks will go off once, three or six times. Since each explosion is worth 500 points, time your jump well!

One defensive tactic is to let Super Mario die. He then turns into a semi-transparent Mario and is invulnerable for a few seconds.

Just before the end of World 3-1 there is a stairway. When Koopa Troopa comes down the stairway and reaches the lowest step, jump on him to make him stop and then keep jumping on him and score a 1-UP for every jump – up to 100! Don't go over the 100 though, or the game will be over.

If you lose all your Marios – annoying when you've got to World 8 – press the start button while holding down the A button. You'll now be able to start on level one of the last World you visited. However, you only get another three Marios.

Remember, Mario runs faster when you press the B button, so at the end of the Bonus stage in the clouds in World 3 – at the place where every other block is in line – hold down the B button and you can collect all the coins without falling down.



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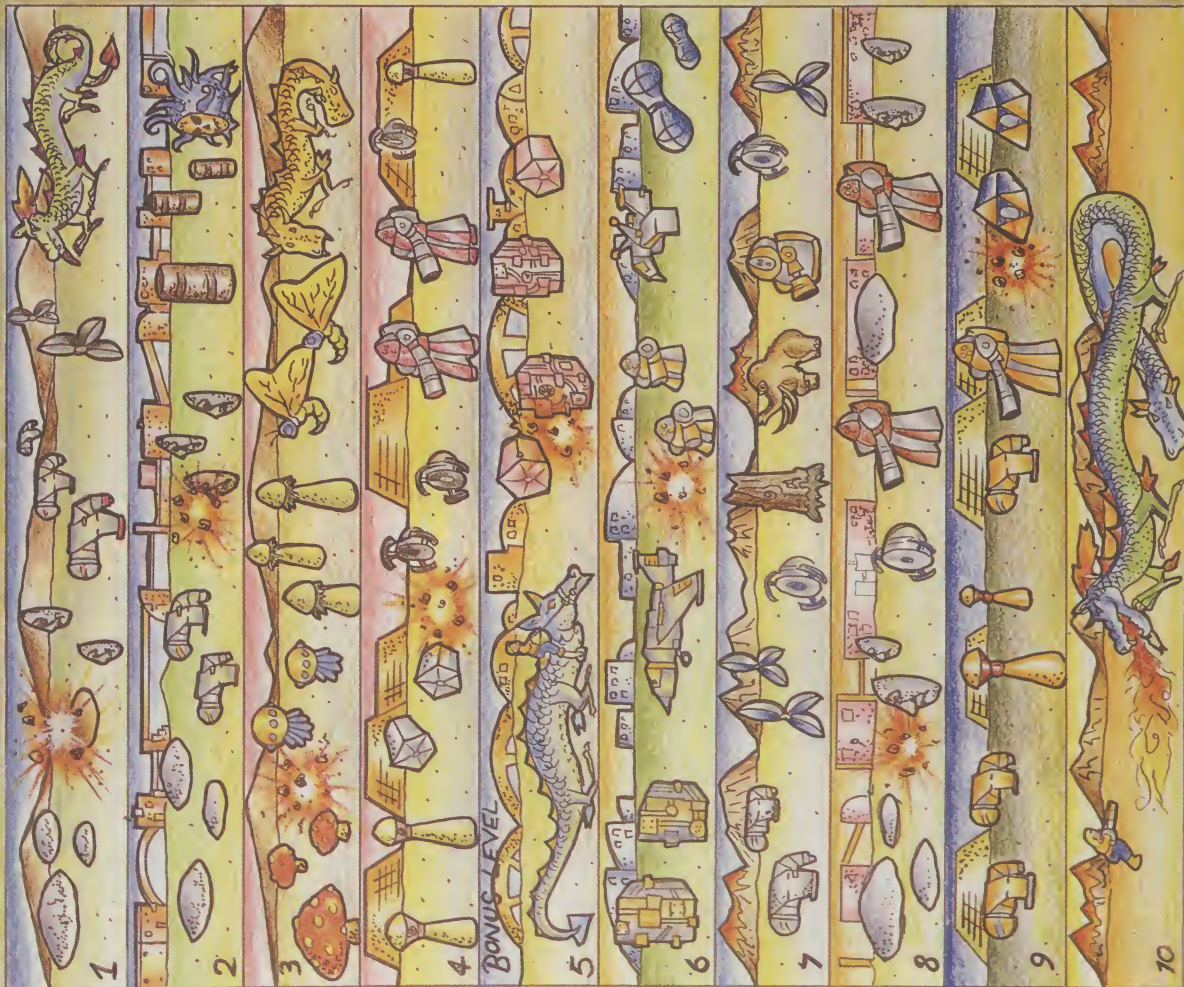


* Screen shots from Atari ST version.

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SPACE AND HARrier



SPACE HARRIER

If getting through the ST version of the game is still proving too tough – despite the glorious guide on page 136 – simply type this listing in to ST basic and save it. Then insert a blank disk on which you have previously created an AUTO folder, and run the program.

Now, reset the computer with the disk still in the drive and wait until the drive motor stops. Put the Space Harrier disk 1 into the drive and hit a key. The game should load as normal but with infinite credit (you may continue playing after losing all your lives, as often as you like).

```
10 rem infinite credit for Space Harrier
20 addr=&h7fd00
30 def seg=0 '1985 version of BASIC only
40 for f=0 to 239 step 2
50 read w$: poke addr+f, val("&h"+w$)
60 next f
70 bsave "auto\shcheat.prg", addr, 240
80 end
90 data 601a,0,ce,0,0,0,0,0
100 data 0,0,0,0,0,0,2a6f,4
110 data 203c,0,800,2200,d28d,281,ffff,fffe
120 data
2e41,2f00,2f0d,4267,3f3c,4a,4e41,3f3c
130 data 8,4e41,4267,4879,0,c2,3f3c,4e
140 data
4e41,4a40,66e8,42a7,42a7,4879,0,c2
150 data
2f3c,4b,3,4e41,2e40,2e00,2040,91fc
160 data 0,300,2848,203c,0,11,20e8,400
170 data 51c8,ffa,397c,42a,1a,397c,3ea,16
180 data 91fc,0,4,30bc,4e75,243c,0,200
190 data 263c,0,d4e,4eac,14,d9fc,0,444
200 data
2c6f,10,294e,98c,2f07,4eac,2fe,4eac
210 data 4e,4eac,a0,ddf,0,bc46,2cbc,4e71
220 data
4e71,4eac,1a4,4eac,200,4eac,232,6175
230 data 746f,5c61,2e70,7267,0,0,2c,1400
```

■ Mark Richardson, Preston

LISTING
OOPS!

The Gremlins got in the works in September's issue and managed to mess up Mark Richardson's *ST Alien Syndrome* poke.

Line 250 SHOULD have read:

```
250 data
0,10,2040,2068,8,6100,1e,2e40
```

Line 260 SHOULD have read:

```
260 data
2f00,4eef,104,2a2e,2a00,5c61,7574,6f
5c
```

The listing WILL now work.

OODLES OF SOFTWARE?

And it's all FREE! All you have to do is send in your maps, tips and pokes to the following address: **TRICKS 'N' TACTICS, ACE, 4 QUEEN STREET, BATH BA1 1EJ** and you could win up

to SIX top rated games for your machine! This month there's no 'Tip of the Month' prize – well, Mike Powell and Tony Crowther don't need the games do they? Still, we'll give Paul Webster a copy of

Operation Wolf for his ST, Jason Richardson a copy of *Total Eclipse* for his Spectrum. The two Marks (Richardson and Bellwood) earn themselves copies of *Puffy's Saga* for their troubles. Don't just sit there! Go for it!

ELITE

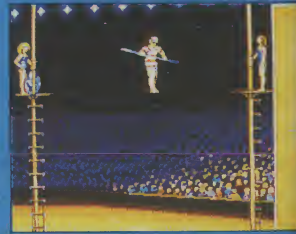
■ If you own an ST, if you keep getting wasted by Thargoids, and if you'd like to cheat – simply type in the following listing and run it for a few handy accessories!

Running the listing creates a saved game on a disk which offers the following: A front military laser, a beam laser on each side and a mining laser on the rear. You will also get four missiles, an energy bomb, a docking computer, fuel scoop, ECM jammer, large cargo bay, escape pod and over 10,000 credits. When you RUN the program, it will save a file onto disk called 'CHEAT.CDR'. Next time you want all the above features, simply load up Elite and then load in the saved game created. NOTE the program will not work with Hisoft Basic.

```
100 rem ELITE CHEAT
110 rem By Paul Webster
120 rem READ THE NOTES FIRST
130 def seg=0: rem 1985 basic only
140 chksum=0: addr=&h7fd00
150 for i=0 to 15
160 print "reading data: Line ";300+(i*10)
170 for j=0 to 15 step 2
180 read w$: word=val("&h"+w$)
190 poke addr+((i*16)+j),word
200 chksum=chksum+word
210 if chksum>29875 then chksum=chksum AND &hFFF
220 next j
230 read chk
240 if chk<>chksum then print "Error in data at line ";300+(i*10): end
250 chksum=0: next i
260 print "data read ok, creating file."
270 bsave "CHEAT.CDR", addr, 256
280 print "finished."
290 end
300 DATA
FFFE,A7B6,F9B2,4EAB,F7F1,D2F4,F3F3
,5445,25390
310 DATA
EFA5,EDAA,EBEE,E9FF,FFE6,65E4,63E
E,E1E1,3797
320 DATA
```

```
DFDF,DDDD,0DDA,D9D9,D7D6,55D6,53
D3,D1D0,2238
330 DATA
CFCE,CDCC,CBCA,C9C8,C7C6,C5C4,C
3C2,C1C0,1592
340 DATA
BFBE,BDBC,BBBA,B9B8,B7B6,B5B4,B3
B2,B1B0,1464
350 DATA
AFAE,ADAC,ABAA,A9A8,A7A6,A5A4,A3A
2,A1A0,1336
360 DATA
9F9E,9D9C,9B9A,9998,9796,9594,9392,9
190,1208
370 DATA
8F8E,8D8C,8B8A,8988,8786,8584,8382,8
180,1080
380 DATA
7F7E,7D7C,7B7A,7978,7514,7574,7372,7
175,347
390 DATA
6F6F,6D6C,6B6A,6928,6775,6541,6362,6
160,25317
400 DATA
133F,2B39,5B3F,5958,5756,5554,5350,51
50,21593
410 DATA
4F4E,4D4C,4B4A,4948,4746,4544,4342,4
140,568
420 DATA
3F3E,3D3C,3B3A,3938,3736,3534,3332,3
130,12728
430 DATA
2F2E,2D2C,2B2A,2928,2726,2524,2322,2
120,20792
440 DATA
1F1E,1D1C,1B1A,1918,1716,1514,1312,1
110,16568
450 DATA
0F0E,0D0C,0B0A,0908,0706,0504,0302,0
100,16440
```

■ Paul Webster, Preston.



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Welcome to a whole new section on adventure, role-play, and fantasy.

Every month we'll be asking the best writers to keep you up to date with all the news on your favourite software. We'll be carrying stories on the stories behind the stories, analysis of adventure and role-playing trends, interviews with programmers, and of course the most authoritative reviews of the latest games.

All this means that we bid a fond farewell to The Pilgrim, who heads off to pastures new. In case that should prompt you to shed a tear, cheer up – because the new column will be edited by Steve Cooke, ex-ACE editor and a man who not only knows a good adventure when he sees one but can also sniff a turkey either side of Christmas...



Atari ST - life is just a bowl of goldfish in Fish.
But why am I upside down?_

FISH

MAGNETIC SCROLLS/ RAINBIRD bowl you over...



Atari ST - it may take some time for your Fish-turned-human to see the wood for the trees

MAGNETIC Scrolls' latest product just missed our last issue, but we've used the time since and can bring you not only the review, but also an interview with author Phil South. Here's the low-down, straight from the codpiece...

Fish is a four-part game, with three introductory scenarios and a larger game area in which the bulk of the action takes place. The game follows in the MS tradition, featuring excellent graphics, a powerful parser, and a good deal of weird humour.

If the weird humour puts you off, don't despair. Compared to *The Pawn* – and certainly compared with *Jinxter* – *Fish* is...well...funnier. Although the laughs don't always come off, the overall feeling is of a game with a more straightforward approach. The emphasis is on humour, not silliness.

In common with games like *Lords of Time* and *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*, *Fish* creates a scenario in which you can move from one adventureworld to another. The story goes something like this:

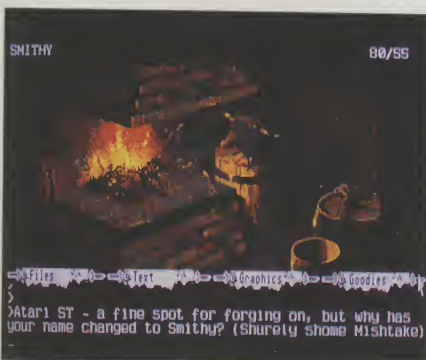
You are an Inter-Dimensional Espionage Operative with the power to 'warp' from one body to another. Your host body can be anything from a cod to a camel to a chartered accountant. In *Fish*, you are variously a goldfish, a music technician and a rock star (among others). This allows you to explore a number of very different worlds and, interestingly, one of the technical problems MS had to overcome in the game was adapting the logic to different bodies. Fish, after all, can't always get the same things that humans can.

Your opponents in the game are the Seven

Deadly Fins. From your goldfish bowl, where you start the game, you warp first to three different locations, solve a series of puzzles, and then launch off into Fishworld to do battle with the ungody.

Unfortunately, there are some seriously untidy programming glitches in V1.0 for the ST. When we first saw this version, we were assured that the bugs had been fixed, but they were still there in the production version we finally received for review.

Most of the time the errors are not too serious, though it is annoying to be told that there is a switch on the wall, then to be told a moment later that "There isn't a switch here to do that". Of more importance is a bug concerning the solution of one of the puzzles – so I'll put sufferers out of their misery now by advising them to play all three cassettes at once, one after the other and not to bother removing them from the player in between plays.



Those puzzles that are not afflicted by such problems (!) have a pleasing logicity to them, which is one of MS's strong points. The game as a whole is best compared to *Guild of Thieves* – it has a coherent atmosphere, a strong storyline, and a series of fairly comprehensible objectives. You couldn't really ask for much more from a basic text/graphics game...and it does look VERY pretty!

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THE ACE VERDICT

More gameplay than *Corruption*, better game design than *Jinxter*, and not as quirky as *The Pawn*. This is definitely MS's best release since *Guild of Thieves*, even if version 1.0 on the ST is spoilt by some careless programming.

LANDSCAPE 95 SYSTEM 93
CHALLENGE 92 ENCOUNTERS 90

PHIL GOES SOUTH

"...so there we were, sitting on a coach, talking as we do in an abstract fashion about peculiar things, when I said to John – 'You're a fish. Go west, and what do you see?'. From that suggestion came the idea of saving the world from your goldfish bowl. John went strangely quiet, and a few hours later he called me and said we were writing a game for Magnetic Scrolls."

So that's how it happens, eh? John Molloy, music technologist, and Phil South, mind mechanic, (aided by devil's advocate Peter Kemp and MS staffer Rob Steggles) are the first outside game designers to produce an adventure under contract for Mag Scrolls. It looks like being a great success, despite the problems of creative collaboration.

"I'm pleased it has come out so well," admits Phil, "I couldn't write in the MS style unfortunately, but the original flavour of the game has come through, although it was written by a sort of committee."

The original purpose involves creating a consistent reality in a world full of water – not an easy thing to do at all. Phil and John went all out for consistency of logic in the design of the scenario and the puzzles. Their main aim was the suspension of disbelief regarding "fish people in a fishy world".

The game owes a lot to Phil, John and Pete's early experiences with Infocom games. *Sorcerer* and *Enchanter* were their favourites. "I liked all their early stuff, but those two games I played extensively. I also played *The Hobbit* and solved it without help, which I was very proud of. *Jewels of Darkness* has been another favourite of mine."

Interestingly, Phil regards adventure games as multi-player experiences. "I prefer to play with someone else around, and look on them very much as two-

player games." The image you get is of someone for whom adventuring is above all a means of having fun – a feeling that definitely comes across while playing *Fish*. As a result he has a pragmatic attitude to games in general:

"I don't agree with over-complex parsers that can't guess misspelt words – even if it's only by evading the problem and requiring only a few letters for each word. Infocom used to have a parser that only read the first four letters, and I think I'd prefer that to something so complicated it gets in the way."

ACE certainly agrees with him about overly complex parsers. In the MS parser, for example, you can type GO NORTH and you simply bump your nose

into a door if there's one there and it's closed. This doesn't actually happen in real life – people open doors (unless they're locked) – they don't walk into them. Complexity at the expense of reality is simply a waste of effort.

So will Phil be collaborating on any more games for Mag Scrolls? Or for anyone, come to that?

"I'm sure I will," he chirps, "I've got lots of ideas, but at the moment there are none that would make a good adventure – ideas for stories, books, but not for games." Sooner or later, however, we will doubtless be seeing more from this gent. "I did have an idea – *Leather Clad Rent Boys of Doom* – but oddly enough no one wanted it. Wonder why?"

Phil South. With a name like that, you just HAVE to play adventures!



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AAA 1988 - THE ACE ADVENTURE AWARDS



**Mindfighter...Mon
o graphics, luke-
warm reception.**

Sherlock Holmes, plus *Magnetic Scrolls'* *Jinxter*. After much debate, the winner is: ***Mindfighter***, complete with a printed guide to insomnia.

Congratulations Anna, but we know you'll pull round with release number 2.

WEIRDEST GAME OF THE YEAR

Three strong candidates here – *Beyond Zork* for its shameless pursuit of the Coconut of Quendor, together with its flirtation with role-playing; *Slaine* for a user interface that defied belief as the commands flashed through the hero's brain; and finally, the undoubted winner, Infocom's ***Nord'n'Bert Couldn't Make Head Nor Tail of It...*** and neither could anyone else!

MOST INNOVATIVE GAME OF THE YEAR

Entries here include *Plundered Hearts*, for its excursion into romance; lcom's games for their user interface; *Legend of 'he*

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE YEAR

Candidates for this much coveted award include Abstract Concept's *Mindfighter*, *Lancelot*, Infocom's *Borderzone* and

Sword for its scrolling on-screen map; *Nord'n'Bert* for its game structure; and *Ingrid's Back* for its character development. There was much debate over this award, but in the end it was decided that by opening up a different approach to narrative within adventuring, ***Plundered Hearts*** should get the prize. *Ingrid's Back* comes a close second, but characters are only as important as the story within which they appear.



**Time and Magik -
best value for
money around .**

BEST VALUE OF THE YEAR

No contest...it's got to be ***Time and Magik*** from Level 9/Mandarin. Three games for the price of one, and not one a turkey.

BEST RPG-INFLUENCED GAME OF THE YEAR

Candidates here include *Ultima V*, *Bards Tale III*, *Pool of Radiance*, and *Wasteland*. There's a clear winner here, naturellement, and by the beard of Blackthorne, it has to be ***Ultima V*** closely followed by *Wasteland* and *Pool of Radiance*. For those who want a good chop, however, *BTIII* still ranks near the top.

PRETTIEST GAME OF THE YEAR

Up on the catwalk we have the *Magnetic Scrolls* products, chased petulantly off the stage by those romantic French chappies with *Mortville Manor* and *Chronoquest* (via *Psygnosis*). The prize finally goes to ***Mortville Manor*** with its sexy voice synthesis and alluring interior locations. Not much of a brain, though...

GAME OF THE YEAR

Again, it seems there's a clear winner. A game that has succeeded in widening the market for its own product style, is on course to sell a million copies, held the Pilgrim captive at the keyboard for weeks, and stopped much of the work in the offices of magazines around the country...***Ultima V***. Concerning which, the best story we've heard to date is the man who rang us up about the game from the office of a famous news agency, told us he was just loading it up, and asked whether it was any good.



**Ultima V: Game
of the year.**

When we tried to phone him back, he'd left his desk with the disk and gone home. He didn't return for three weeks! Just one among many similar tales of shameless addiction...

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY OF 1988...

...and a few questions about the future of adventuring.

There's no doubt about it – we've seen more changes in the adventure scene during 1988 than during the five previous years. Not since 1983 and the launch of *The Hobbit* has there been a more significant year for the adventurer.

The keynote has been the emergence in strength of role-playing influences. ACE reviewed no less than eight RPG-influenced titles in the adventure section during the year – and that doesn't include titles (such as *Pool of Radiance* and *Heroes of the Lance*) that were reviewed elsewhere in the magazine. Even Infocom is entering the RPG arena with *Journey* – not yet seen over here in the UK but looking strong on visual presentation at least.

Apart from that, there have been two other developments which should prove highly significant. The first is Level 9's dogged pursuit of character development. Everyone knows what we think about this – characters have to be the way forward for true interactive fiction development. At present there is still too much money going into

graphics and user interface development, and not enough into the mechanics of character handling. 1989 could see a change here...

The other obvious change is the move towards 16-bit. For adventurers, this simply means more concentration on disk-based games with larger scenarios and better graphics. In the case of the Amiga and the PC, it will also see greater penetration of this market by American software houses. That's not bad news – *Magnetic Scrolls* and *Level 9* need to be kept on their toes! In the past, American games such as *Tass Times in Tonetown* and *Borrowed Time* kept reminding us of another, equally rewarding adventure tradition.

THE CRYSTAL BALL...

What does 1989 hold? Here are some predictions:

MAGNETIC SCROLLS will stop releasing titles in the autumn of 1989 while they debug their new RPG-based system...

LEVEL 9 will produce an icon-driven game for Christmas (see news story elsewhere)

SIERRA ON-LINE will produce a top-selling game for the PC that will be converted onto the ST and Amiga and make this company one of the bigger names of 1989.

INFOCOM will cut prices dramatically and produce a budget range of games.

A FRENCH ADVENTURE will reach the top ten in the charts on the Atari ST.

ABSTRACT CONCEPTS will relaunch with a new adventure development system.

US GOLD will launch a dedicated fantasy label.

A RUSSIAN ADVENTURE will enter the rumour mill but never appear.

A JAPANESE COMPANY will produce a fantasy role-playing game for the coin-op market that will be licensed and produced by **US GOLD**.

The last **TEXT ONLY** game to be commercially produced will be released by **TOPOLOGIKA**

Happy 1989!

THE MESSAGE BOARD

What?? Only one letter this month? Not for long, we hope. From next issue onwards, we'll be printing readers' letters in this space – and giving away some great prizes to the writers of those that really sparkle. The price of a stamp, together with your views on any aspect of adventuring, could put your name on these pages...so jump to it, and you might win a free game into the bargain!

SHODDY?

I enclose a solution to *Ingrid's Back* (Thanks, Rob.) which I personally consider to be infinitely superior to its predecessor, *Gnome Ranger*. Since the latter won the award for Best Adventure last year, I cannot see how *Ingrid's Back* can fail to follow up on its success. I reckon that it would even get my vote ahead of *Beyond Zork*.

However, the game is choc-a-bloc with bugs, inconsistencies, and so on. I feel that both Level 9 and Magnetic Scrolls are in too much of a rush to get their games out and are

cutting too many corners in the finishing stages as a result. What say you?

By the way, I've gone back to *Lancelot* and found the missing 60 points. In the cell, give the love potion to the maid, who falls in love with you and helps you to escape. I'm sure I tried that before with no success. Ho hum...

Rob Marshall, Cheshire

I didn't feel that Ingrid's Back was as bad as Lancelot in respect of untidiness, but I take your point. The problem with adventures has always been that 'commercial reality' – for which read 'need for dosh' – has outweighed creative effort and ingenuity to some extent. Remember Software Project's Legionnaire (or whatever it was called): trying to review it, I found that although you had to go upstairs to solve an early puzzle, the parser didn't understand any words for going downstairs. There were some interesting quotes from Software Projects about that game, none of which were printed...

PAT'S PATCH

Pat Winstanley continues her occasional column on DIY adventure writing...This month she looks at coping with numerous different player inputs.

Modern commercial adventures have moved beyond the old verb/noun/input format, allowing the player tremendous freedom of expression. This can cause headaches for the writer trying to allow for different inputs which should produce the same result, necessitating an awful lot of conditions all of which are identical except for the input which triggers them. However, users of PAW and STAC can cheat a little by adjusting the player's input before looking at the main condition tables.

For example, think of lighting a lamp and the possible inputs which should work. Lamp on, on lamp, light lamp, turn light on, switch light on – the list is endless. If a condition is entered for each of these variations, memory will rapidly be used up. Much better is to use one condition to catch the player's input, and transform it to the

input required for the condition.

With STAC this can be handled using system variables. Thus if we had a condition on the lines of:

IF VERB 'LIGHT' AND
NOUN 'LAMP' AND
RESET? (LIT) THEN SET
(LIT) OK

Changing the player's actual input to read 'light lamp' is simply a matter of using the command x WORD y which changes the number held in one of the variables NOUN1, VERB1 etc. This is most easily done in a special condition reserved for transforming inputs and would have entries like:

IF VERB 'TURN' AND
NOUN 'LIGHT' AND
ADVERB 'ON' THEN
'LIGHT' WORD 3 THEN
'LAMP' WORD 1

You must make sure that 'light' is both a verb and a noun, though not necessarily the same number.

The special condition containing this should be called at the beginning of

each local condition which has an entry and the beginning of the low conditions too.

PAW users can do much the same thing, setting up a process table which is called at the beginning of response, but in this case the word 'light' should have a number less than 20. The transforming entry would be something like:

TURN LIGHT
ADVERB 'ON'
LET 33 'LIGHT'
LET 34 'LAMP'

Then in response, or a process table called from there, you would have just one entry to light the lamp.

Using this method saves having to repeat the rest of the conditional and action parts of the main condition/entry and so saves more memory as the number of inputs you allow for is increased. More importantly, it helps make your game very friendly for the player.

NO PROBLEM!

Yup, it's no problem when you've got people like James Neville of Lingfield and Rob Marshall, ... bringing you tips to hustle you out of the tightest spots.

Keep the clues coming in, everyone. The best way to submit them is on a postcard, with the name of the puzzle and the solution clearly stated. Send them to: Steve Cooke, c/o 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ.



INGRID'S BACK

Some tips on getting signatures for your petition...

Sign it yourself.

Get eight signatures at Gnettlefield Farm – Gnoggin, Grandma, Armillaria, Bumpy, Arback Garden, Gnoah, Dimple, and Gnora.

Get Flopsy to wait outside Isfrunt's front door. Go to the back door and knock, then go back to the front...

Leave the petition on the table in the hermit's at Three Mole Hill. Return later to retrieve it (signed).

CORRUPTION

Get the stethoscope for use later in opening the safe. Turn the dial four times and take receipts, ledger and chips.

Read everything in the briefcase to get extra points.

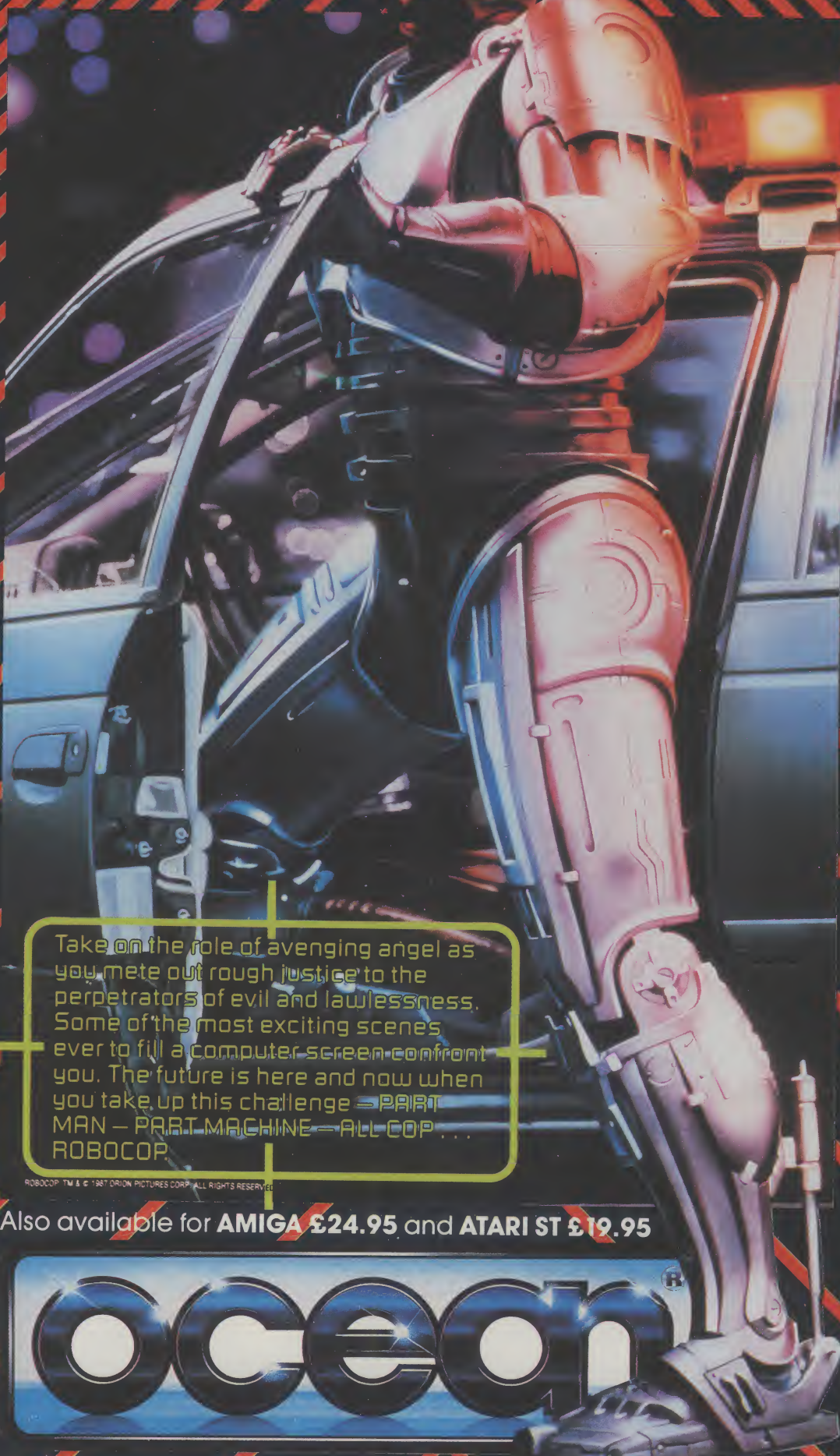
You need to hand over information on eight points to Goddard as well as telling Sergeant Russell about the Coke. The points are: affidavit, certificate, conversation, tape, ledger, receipts, envelope and casino. You will need concrete evidence to hand over.



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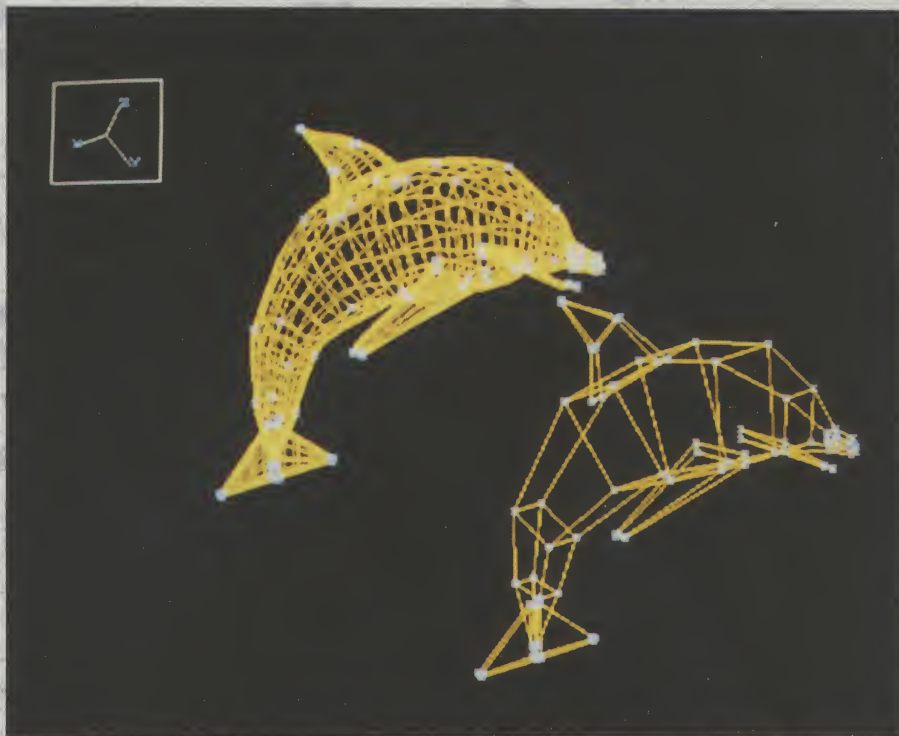
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IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

Since the arrival of the Amiga two years ago the pace of software development in the computer graphics field has accelerated remarkably – not because of the Amiga, as its fans would like us to believe, but in a parallel development. Esoteric tools like ray-tracing, texture mapping, delta compression and beta splines have all quickly found their way from R&D labs via industry-standard workstations to computers like the Amiga and Archimedes. Now, *Forms in Flight 2* from Micro Magic and the Amiga Centre Scotland adds curved 'Surface Patches', to the portfolio of tools available for the Amiga, while *Euclid* from ACE Computing (no relation) offers real time animation on the Archimedes.



TWO YELLOW DOLPHINS - the first stage in preparing an image with *Forms in Flight*, a package which allows complex curved shapes to be generated from simple flat surfaces... and then animated. The dolphin on the right has curves with one 'side' the other has eight. By increasing the number of 'sides' of each curve, a basic angular skeleton (with the advantage of a fast redraw time) can be transformed to a smooth organic shape.

At first sight, *Forms in Flight 2* seems a rather homespun, MeSSDOS type of package. Certainly the interface is decidedly non-Amiga-standard, and is the worse for it. In time it is possible to get used to the movable, triple-depth menu system, but the lack of keyboard equivalents and almost total absence of any iconic interface seems a rather quirky backward step. Nevertheless, once you pass this barrier the program proves to be very powerful, offering a unique modelling system using 'surface patches' to generate complex curved shapes from very simple flat surfaces, as well as a means to animate the curved shapes once they have been created.

FORMS...

The real power of the surface patch technique is provided by its ability to change the number

of sides of an object quickly and easily. The fundamental component used in *Forms in Flight 2* (FIF2) is the 'surface'; either a flat surface, an FSURF, with any number of control 'nodes', or a three-dimensional surface, a QSURF, always limited to four 'nodes'. For either type of surface the curve connecting two nodes can have any number of 'sides' but the more there are the smoother the curve will be. With one 'side' for instance the 'curve' would be straight, but with ten sides quite smooth curves can be generated, a principle illustrated by the two yellow wire frame dolphins above.

In practice the simple, one-sided form is very quick to render whereas the complex, multiple-sided form can take several minutes, even in wire-frame. To avoid annoying delays during construction the structure is modelled initially using a simple angular 'skeleton' that is easy to

manipulate. Later, by increasing the number of sides with one straightforward command, beautifully curved objects can be generated.

Because of this ability to transform rudimentary and angular structures into smoothly curved forms there is a great temptation to 'try out' the final form as soon as possible. This should only be attempted with care as it is very easy, at least initially, for the novice to move the object or viewpoint into an awkward position, even upside-down. Recovering from this predicament can be quite difficult because of the curious method used to move the viewpoint or 'camera position'.

In many ways rotating the viewpoint is a bit like using a mouse to control the spacecraft in *Zarch/Virus* or the plane in *Flight Simulator 2*. With lots of practice it might become intuitive but for the beginner it is forbidding. Part of the problem is caused by long redraw times which delay movements. If the program replaced the object during a viewpoint/camera move by a simple rectangular 3D box with the same orientation as the object being represented, movement could take place in real time. This solution is used by *Caligari* (see Graphic Accounts this issue) and seems the ideal way to handle object or viewpoint manipulation.

As well as the wire-frame mode, there are two other rendering techniques available in FIF2: shading and texture mapping. Compared to *Sculpt Animate* or *Turbo Silver*, the shading mode is very limited. A maximum of 32 shades (in lo-res) are used but they are dithered very effectively, and Phong Shading is used to smooth out angular and faceted surfaces. There is no ray-tracing and only one, fixed light

(Below left) NETTED DOLPHIN

The final image (below right) is made up from a QSURF, extruded along a curved path to form a series of similar surfaces linked by patches. The size of each 'cross-section' is adjusted to give the tapering body. Several more QSURFs are given a little thickness and positioned as fins, tail, mouth parts and flippers. All surfaces are texture mapped from a single full screen IFF picture. Here, the full rendition was saved as an IFF file, brought back as a background picture and the wire frame dolphin placed in front to show the structure.

(Below right) SPOTTED DOLPHIN.

A spotted dolphin flies through the waves - the finished image created with *Forms in Flight 2*, this time shown in all its glory without the wireframe grid. The background is an IFF image produced using *Deluxe Paint II*.



source. IFF pictures can be brought in and used as foreground or background, or mapped onto any QSURF. Check the box for a description of texture mapping.

...IN FLIGHT?

Animation seems almost to have been added to the system as an afterthought – not that the motion control provided is lacking in power, but



YELLOW WIRFRAME DOLPHIN with 10 'sided' curves, placed against the same imported background used in the final image. Note how much smoother the network is, as compared to the picture of TWO YELLOW DOLPHINS.

transformations of the objects themselves are rather limited. Any selectable object, including individual FSURFs and QSURFs, can be assigned a 'frame block'. This allows the object to be moved in any plane, along any path – or none – and sized or 'rounded'. Using this method it would be possible to move the wings of a bird up and down for instance, but controlling the choreography involved would be horrendously difficult. The name of the whole package sums up the feel of the motion it allows... the forms fly – but like a frisbee rather than a bird. They don't flap their wings!

...AND LANDING.

Forms in Flight 2 has come a long way from version 1. The facilities for texture mapping and surface patches are welcome – the transformation of a crude and angular approximation of an object to its beautifully curved final version is magical, but the user interface needs a similar transformation. Camera motion would also be greatly improved if some indicator – even just the xyz axes arrows – rotated in real time.

Rendering works very well within its limitations. An extra option to render in HAM mode – or better still to ray-trace would have been wonderful. Animation of complete objects is quick and easy – an advantage of not using ray-tracing – but some sort of inbetweening is almost essential to get a real feeling of self-propulsion from the wonderfully organic and animate looking forms that this package can create.

FORMS IN FLIGHT 2

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TEXTURE MAPS AND PATCHWORK

Every flat screen image consists of an array of pixels arranged in straight vertical and horizontal rows. A texture mapping procedure examines the surface onto which this array is to be mapped and divides it up evenly into a similar, though distorted grid. The colour of each pixel on the original array is then transferred to the new grid, eventually producing a distorted 'map' of the entire image.

A number of Amiga graphics packages now offer some form of texture mapping. *Photon Paint* will map any area of any screen defined as a brush onto one of a number of pre-defined object shapes. Being a HAM program it has a wide range of shades available and so is able to tone the final object to show a light-source, which can be user-definable. *Forms In Flight 2* can only use a maximum of 32 shades, so lighting effects are not available. Nevertheless, it is capable of mapping onto the most convoluted surfaces, all of which should be completely

under the control of the user. The skin of the SPOTTED DOLPHIN was originally a full screen picture of a section of this pattern, mapped onto each of the QSURF's that make up the body.

PATCHWORK

The complex curves of the dolphins shown on these pages are made up from a series of surface patches linked together. The form of each patch depends on the way that the four curves forming its boundary are distorted. Each patch can be visualised like a patch on the knee of a pair of jeans. The fabric was originally flat, but by drawing the corners back over the curve of the knee it also becomes curved in

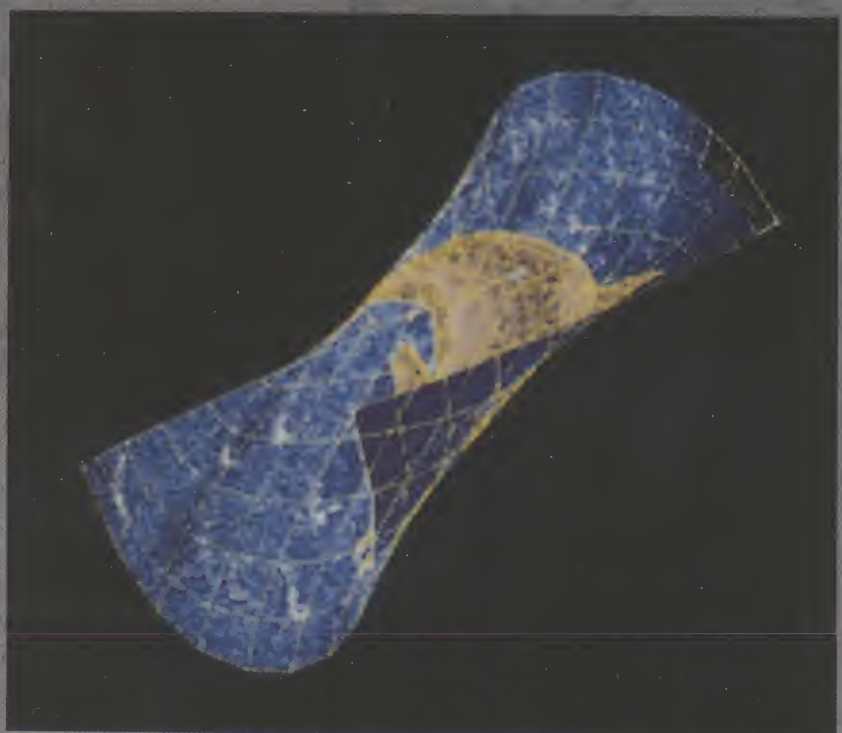
three dimensions. The effect is illustrated best by example. The two texture mapped surface patches shown here are copies of the picture NETTED DOLPHIN, texture mapped onto a single QSURF surface patch. Superimposing the yellow wireframe curves shows more clearly that one end is bowed up and the other down.

As natural forms are increasingly becoming the target of computer graphic artists and designers, organic modelling techniques like surface patches are gaining in importance. *Sculpt 4D*, the professional version of *Sculpt/Animate* will provide a similar method to generate curved surfaces.



(Left) A texture mapped surface patch of Netted Dolphin

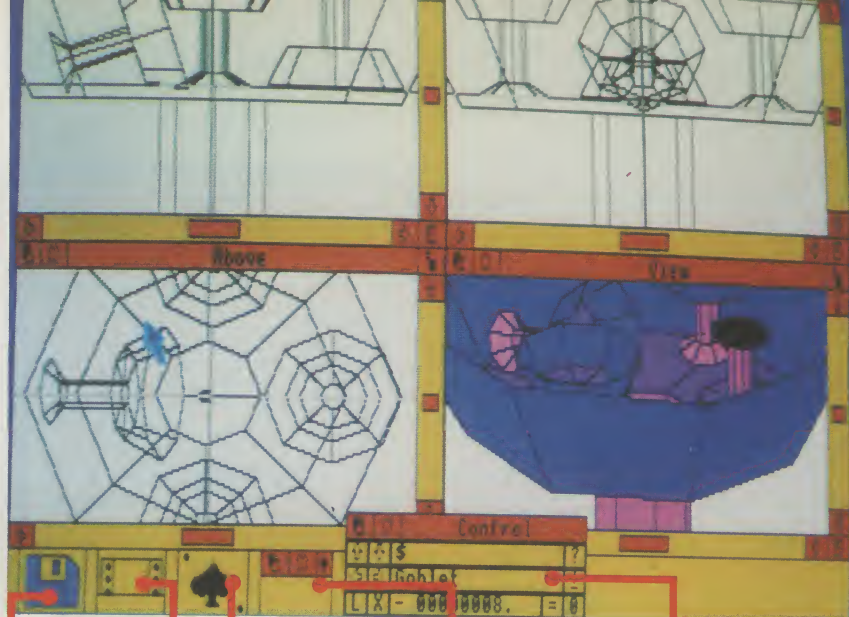
(Below) The same texture mapped surface patch with the outline of the wireframe structure superimposed for clarity...



Some of the most enduring computer entertainment programs seem to achieve their success by making demands on the user which require no little effort of the intellect. The scholar who will break into beads of perspiration at the mere mention of homework and who will do anything, even the washing up, to avoid the evening's light entertainment set by his teachers, seems to think nothing of doing intellectual battle for hours with computer adventures and puzzles. *Euclid*, which at first sight may be mistaken for a rather dull program for computer-aided-design, is quite an adventure. The deeper it is explored, the more rewarding it becomes.

Euclid is NOT a paintbox program, and

(Right) In *Euclid*, you modify your design by working on the three orthogonal windows - headed up as Front, Left and Above. Move the cursor into a window, and you can start work on its contents, and to take a closer look, a window can be enlarged and popped over its brothers on screen. The View window shows the results of changes made in the orthogonal windows.



File and disk I/O menu

Printer and output control menu

The 'goodies' menu - behind this lies a selection of miscellaneous commands that don't fit elsewhere

The window control icon - allows you to choose different viewing (camera) angles for the main VIEW window

The Control Panel allows the *Euclid* user to move through the tree of objects in a data structure

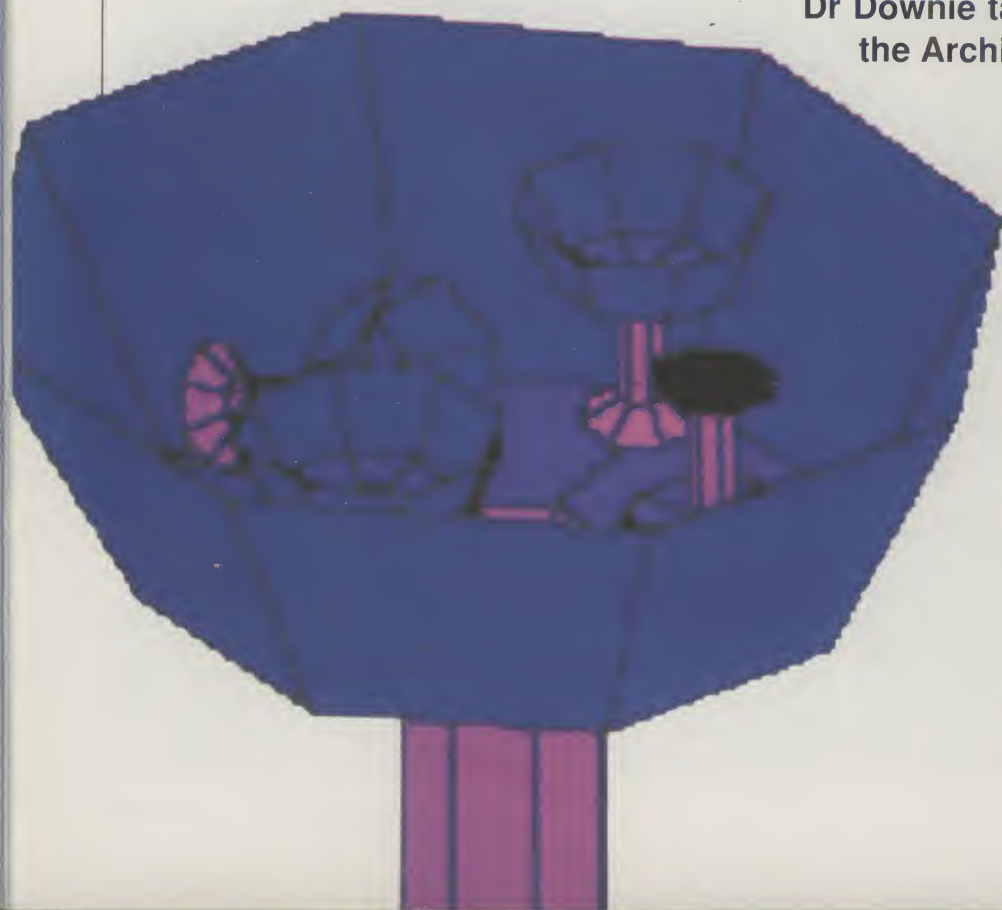
REAL TIME SOLID 3D ANIMATION THE EUCLID WAY

Dr Downie takes the first 3D package for the Archimedes through its paces...

does not produce breathtakingly realistic images with textured surfaces. It is NOT the wonderful *Sculpt 3D* (for the Amiga) with which 3D images of near-photographic realism can be laboriously generated, saved and then replayed in sequence to give the illusion of movement. What it can do, however, is produce 3D worlds with scenes being recalculated at sufficient speed to give the user total control in real time. Structures can be 'flown' through, using the demo program *Fly*. *Euclid*'s purpose is to produce solid 3D pictures of moving objects; the user with minimal programming skills can take advantage of the design program supplied, or the *Euclid* modules can be linked by BASIC or assembler code by an artist who is happy with programming...

A wide variety of demonstrations and examples, BASIC program shells and utilities as well as a couple of freebies (a gigantic LIFE program and a Mandelbrot Set explorer) accompanied the package sent for review. Ace Computing have devoted all their effort to the

(Left) A closer look at the goblet featured in the View Window of the *Euclid* screen shown above.



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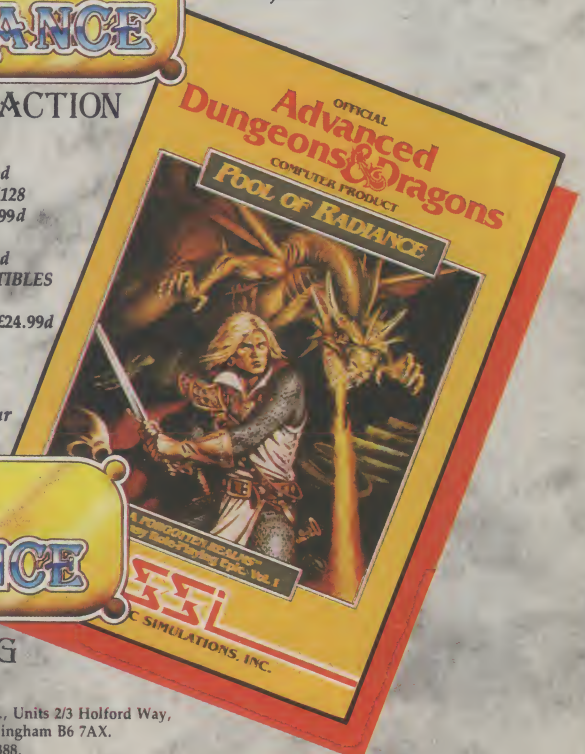
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quality and extent of *Euclid's* capabilities, dispensing with the fancy loader screens and presentation graphics that have become the norm with commercial packages – but the volume of extras makes up for this lack of superficial gloss.

Euclid is quite definitely a surface rather than a solid modeller. Objects are defined by the planes that bound them: there is no discrimination between a hollow box and a solid block, for instance. For most visible purposes this is unimportant, as a box and a block look the same from the outside. References to 'solids' in the manual can be confusing, however. Furthermore, there is no simple concept for producing cross sections, and the computer cannot readily generate 'mass properties' like weights of intersecting components and positions of centres of gravity. With true solid modellers, it is possible to build up structures by adding, subtracting and intersecting primitives like blocks, cylinders, spheres and cones – an approach that often needs considerable computing power if objects of any complexity are to be produced. In *Euclid*, the structures are built from points, lines and surfaces.

STRUCTURED DATA

The package offers an excellent opportunity to learn about graphic data structures, which are a rather like the Archimedes ADFS (disk filing system). 'Objects', like directories, can contain other Objects and Solids, which in this analogy would be like files. Unlike ADFS, *Euclid* can share objects and solids between higher level

objects – change the name or nature of the same Solid contained in different Objects and its associates will also change. Change one copy of an object and all objects will change. *Euclid's* way of structuring data is called the Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG).

The manual needs some very careful reading where it deals with data structure. Words like 'object' have a strict meaning, but 'objects' is also a term used loosely to refer to anything in the system. The text is peppered with Siblings, Parents, objects, Objects, Solids, Primitive Objects, Children, Planes, Points, Vanes, corners and Landscapes – sometimes these words have strict meanings and sometimes they are used in a more general sense. Although capital initials are used in an attempt to differentiate between the specific and general usages, a different typeface for terms would have eased comprehension.

The first section of the manual offers a guided tour which is followed by a detailed user's guide to the Design program. The second section deals with the *Euclid* modules, and acts as a reference text. For more subtle uses of Arthur, the current Archimedes operating system, you need to browse through the REM statements lurking in the demonstration programs. An excellent WIMP environment which offers four views of the structure you are building in the Designer means that you can get quite a way into *Euclid* without referring to the manual, but you will need to explore the example demonstration with the help of the Design chapter in the manual before the full capabilities

ties of the package can be called into play.

The real power of *Euclid* lurks in the second set of utilities on the disk. Using the SYS command in BASIC or the SWI command in assembler, structures built in the designer can be incorporated into your own programs. Full data structure details are given, so more advanced programmers could write their own design interface software, but example programs included in the package can be used as 'recipes' by the less competent programmer.

Screen dump printer drivers are supplied, and *Euclid* supports colour printers as well as HGPL and Plotmate plotters – although plotters can only produce wire frame graphics, since screen memory is used to do the final stage of the hidden-line-removal algorithm.

As a relatively easy route into 3D simulation and the creation of graphic games, *Euclid* is excellent – it can carry out perspective transformations with hidden surface removal, and allows the user to specify lighting sources which causes the resulting intensities to be correctly computed from the different surfaces on screen. But the package excels as an educational tool that offers insight into 3D CAD and scene building. Don't expect an easy ride, though – the program is absorbing but you certainly need to get the brain working...

EUCLID

Archimedes £45 inc VAT and P&P
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Degas Elite,* published by Electronic Arts for the Atari ST



DeLuxe Paint II for the Amiga - also published by Electronic Arts



YOU CAN BUY THESE TWO GRAPHICS PACKAGES AT ACE RATES FROM OUR MAIL ORDER SECTION. SEE PAGE 168 FOR FULL DETAILS.



Coodie - a smart cockroach who negotiates a complex landscape by referring to data on the effects of natural forces such as gravity and the movement of real, live roaches. The first intelligent animal generated by the MIT Media Lab, Coodie was doing his stuff at the CG '88 Show.

there was one. There are plans for an adult version of Knightmare and a satellite version. See what I mean about the world?

HYPERPAINT VS DEGAS ELITE

After an extended session using *Degas Elite* on an Atari 520ST I realise that I was a bit harsh on *HyperPaint* last issue. In many ways it is certainly a better program than *Degas*, not least in having a separate palette for each screen, but the Atari still needs something revolutionary in the way of software to revive interest in it as a graphics machine...

GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS

COMPUTER GRAPHICS 88 (CG88)

The CG shows at Wembley are rapidly becoming recognised as the premier annual computer graphics events in Europe. This year, as usual, a lot of extremely expensive industrial systems featured, and as ever they were somehow rendered boring in direct proportion to their price tag. The exception to this rule was AT&T's Pixel Machine on the SUN stand. CGI - the distributors - had set up this modest looking machine on the edge of the stand and until the images were glimpsed, it was difficult to see what the fuss was about: just a box on the floor, much like a storage heater, attached to a large monitor. But the images... until you have waited 36 hours for one *Sculpt 3D* render on an Amiga, the magic of real-time ray-tracing seems pretty much irrelevant.

Tektronix and Calcomp both demonstrated their wax transfer printers, both priced under £10,000 (now don't rush) but more interesting to mere mortals was the Integrex Colourcel at £3,000. Using the latest ink-jet engine from Canon, it produces astonishingly good colour images of near-photographic quality. As prices of printers fall, this sort of quality should become available to the average home user. The sooner the better!

The Amigas on the Commodore stand were the most affordable machines featured at Wembley. At the moment no-one is promoting the Atari ST or the Archimedes at this level - and the Apple Mac II wasn't at the show, so the Amiga had the field to itself. Disappointingly, Amiga Centre Scotland did not have *Sculpt 4D* on show. Eric Graham had found a few bugs at the last minute, and not wishing to display an imperfect product, didn't send it. They did have a Tektronix printer, a Honeywell slide maker and a 16 million colour scanner though - all well beyond most home users' budget, but going to prove that the Amiga is beginning to be supported by the big boys.

By far the most spectacular software on the Commodore stand was the long-awaited *Caligari*, distributed by Hi-Tension - yet another 3D animation system, but this time one designed to a really professional specification (and with a professional price too - £1,300 just for the software). For the asking price, it was a bit disappointing - no ray-tracing, only 16 colours dithered to produce 80 shades. But the interface is the best yet, offering easy creation and manipulation of objects in real time (with a 3D box used to surround objects when they get too complex for fast screen updates).

GRAPHICS TEA TROLLEY!

Travelling Matte (see last issue) were there, poised it seems to take over the world! The idea of a mobile computer graphics system is a novel but intelligent one, and deserves to succeed. Their latest plan is to trundle a mobile graphics station round the World Trade Centre in New York like a tea trolley - a building full of people needing a better corporate video if ever

NEW PRODUCTS

Despite its absence from CG88 the Mac is coming up fast as its superior specification attracts a greater level of software support. Electronic Arts (0753 46465) are about to release a MacII version of *Deluxe Paint* called *Studio 8*. All the tools of *DPaint 2* and then some are promised, offered in 256 colours at high resolution: should provide some spectacular displays. A review here soon. If you need to ask the price (£349) you couldn't afford the MacII to run it! Also from EA is *Deluxe Print 2* (£49.95) for the Amiga. Full importation of IFF pictures plus ready-made borders, cards, posters, signs, labels, calendars and banners in colour should improve your image.

At the other end of the price spectrum is *Arctist Plus* (Fairhurst Instruments 0625 525694, £19.95), a drawing program for the Archimedes. It seems to provide all of the basics and a bit more - and it should be fast. Also on the Archimedes front, Clare's have just released *Pro Artisan* - the review is imminent!

(Right) *Pro Artisan*, just released by Clare's for the Archimedes at £169.95.



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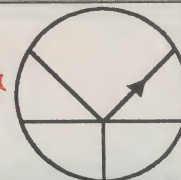
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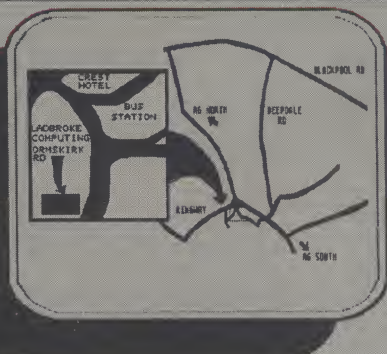
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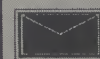


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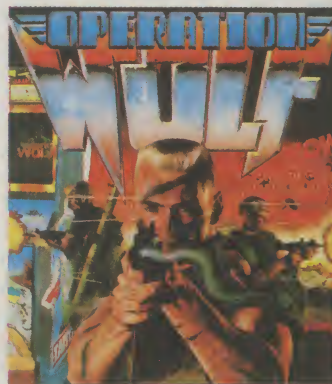
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SPOT THE PUNCH AND WIN A RINGSIDE SEAT

ACE joins SUPERIOR SOFTWARE and ALLIGATA to offer some knockout prizes...



By Fair Means or Foul puts a new twist on the boxing game theme – of course the basic aim is to slug it out in the ring and become the World Champion, but you don't have to fight by the Marquis of Queensberry rules all the time. Head butts, groin kneelings, punches to the

groin and kicks can all be used, providing the referee doesn't see you land them...

The struggle for supremacy in the boxing world involves lots of hard work, dedication and pure determination. Qualities familiar to Barry McGuigan (who has never thrown a foul punch in his career), so Superior and Alligata asked Barry if he would go a few rounds with *By Fair Means or Foul*. He obliged, offering advice to programmer Michael Simpson, and then got straight back into his training schedule.

Barry McGuigan spends a fair while working out in the gym in order to stay in peak condi-

tion. So when Superior Software were putting the finishing touches to *By Fair Means or Foul*, they popped down to watch Barry in action. Someone had a camera, complete with motor drive, and knocked off a series of shots of Barry giving a punchbag some serious aggravation. We've printed one here – Barry McGuigan is just squaring up to the leather, deciding which punch to throw. We haven't

printed the next frame in the sequence, which reveals where the punch landed...

To enter this competition, you'll need to apply skill and judgement and mark the spot where you think the centre of Mr McGuigan's glove made contact with the punchbag.

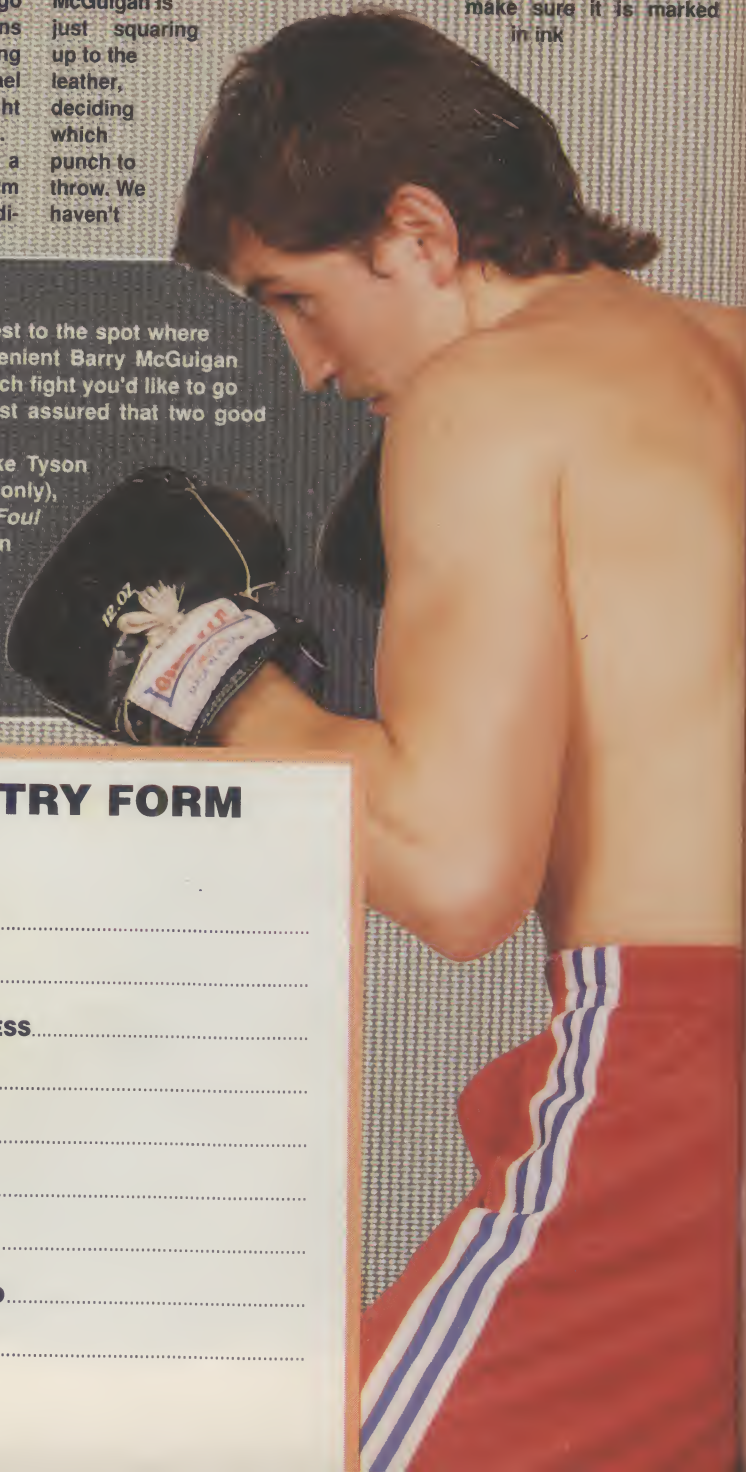
Only one cross, please, and make sure it is marked in ink

THE PRIZES

The person (who in the opinion of the judges etc) gets closest to the spot where the punch lands collects a pair of tickets to the next convenient Barry McGuigan fight – it's a matter of talking to Superior and working out which fight you'd like to go to. You'll have to pay your own expenses to attend, but rest assured that two good seats will be reserved and waiting.

Five runners-up are in line to receive a copy of the Mike Tyson one-hour video called *Boxing's Greatest Knockouts* (VHS only), and then fifteen consolation prizes of *By Fair Means or Foul* posters signed by Barry McGuigan are waiting to be popped in the post to the folks who get closest without actually hitting the spot dead-on.

The closing date for entries is 1st January 1989, so get thinking – remember, you've only got one cross, so place it carefully!



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Our thanks go to Dave Bowden of London for his superb Nigel from Rigel cartoon strip.

NIGEL FROM RIGEL

By Dave Bowden



DJB '88

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CONSOLE SOFTWARE

ACE GUIDE TO CONSOLE SOFTWARE

There's no point owning a console without owning some games to play on it. But what games are out there? Here's the ACE guide to console games that are available NOW.

SEGA GAMES

ACTION FIGHTER £22.95 cart

This shoot-em-up features a motorbike not dissimilar to the one in Hang-On that's bristling with high tech weaponry. Not only that but it can transform into an aircraft or car.

AFTER BURNER £24.95 cart

The console version of the game reviewed on page 54 of this issue. Check out the review for an idea of the game.

ALEX KIDD £22.95 cart

Journey through the planet Aries to the city of Radactian and save it from the evil Janken the Great. The game's an arcade adventure with big cartoon-like sprites. It's got loads of appeal for younger gamers.

ALEX KIDD - THE LOST STARS £24.95 cart

The sequel to the above game. It's in much the same vein as the original game, but this time you're out to return some stars that have been pinched from the heavens above the planet Aries. Again, one for younger gamers.

ALIEN SYNDROME £24.95 cart

This viewed-from-above maze-cum-shoot-em-up game is set in space. You have to rescue friends trapped on various levels of an alien spaceship. Features huge, grotesque end of level guardians.

ASTRO WARRIOR / PIT POT £22.95 cart

Two games on one cartridge here. Astro Warrior's a simple Space Invaders type shoot-em-up and Pit Pot is a simple maze game. Both games are simple but enjoyable.

AZTEC ADVENTURE £22.95 cart

You are in the legendary Aztec Paradise and have to fight your way the labyrinth inhabited by mysterious (and deadly)

Aztec demons, monsters and spirits.

BANK PANIC £14.95 card

Sega's version of the ancient arcade game where you have to shoot bank robbers as they come into the bank and avoid shooting the innocent citizens who are depositing money.

BLACK BELT £22.95 cart

This is a viewed-side-on beat-em-up in which you have to prove you're worthy of owning a black belt by defeating numerous enemies.

CAPTAIN SILVER £24.95 cart

A horizontally scrolling combat game - check out the review on page 76.

CHOPLIFTER £22.95 cart

Another old arcade game this. You're flying a helicopter across horizontally scrolling scenery, bombing baddies and rescuing goodies.

ENDURO RACER £22.95 cart

Climb aboard your dirt bike and go racing, against the clock, over several courses complete with bumps and other riders to avoid.

FANTASY ZONE £22.95 cart

Another one for younger gamers. Huge cartoon sprites abound as you go trolling round gathering coins to buy parts and arms for your spaceship. Then you're ready to go blasting some aliens.

FANTASY ZONE II £24.95 cart

The sequel to the above game in much the same vein, plus a few extras.

F16 FIGHTER £14.95 card

As pilot of the F16 Fighting Falcon, your mission is to seek out and destroy as many enemy aircraft as you can whilst remaining airborne.

GANGSTER TOWN £19.95 cart

For use with the Light Phaser. You're an FBI agent in the 1920s, pursuing a

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Check out the review on page 76 for details.

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KUNG FU KID £22.95 cart

This cartoon-style beat-em-up is no pushover. The opponents are tough (fortunately you can rely on your talisman to keep you out much of the trouble) and numerous.

LORD OF THE SWORD £24.95 cart

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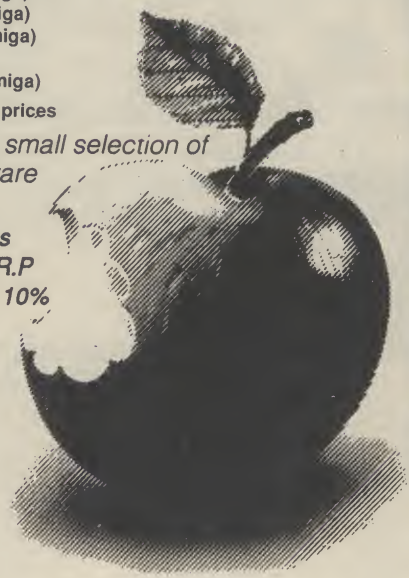
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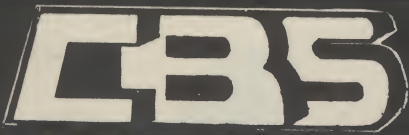
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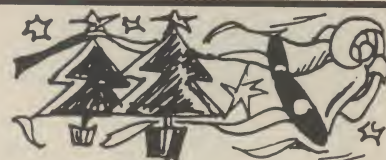
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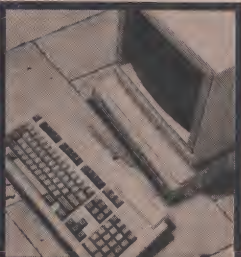

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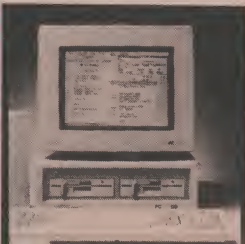


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HARDWARE UPGRADE GUIDE

	ACORN ARCHIMEDES	APPLE MACINTOSH
THE RANGE	The 305 and 310 are home machines, while the 410 and 440 are only really of interest to serious users.	The Mac SE comes in a distinctive upright monitor/system box with built-in drives, while the Mac II's system/drive box and dedicated monitor are separate. Both have separate keyboard and mouse.
MEMORY & CHIPS	The 305 has 512K of memory while the 310 has 1Mb, but both use Acorn's own super-fast 32-bit ARM chip as their central processor.	Though both machines have 1Mb of memory, the SE only has a Motorola 68000 to push it around while the II uses the much faster (but closely related) 68020.
PRICES	Recommended retail prices start at £801.60 for the 305 on its own. There's no sign of a second-hand market as yet.	Recommended retail prices start at £2,294 for the SE and £4,329 for the Mac II. Macs tend to keep their value well, so second-hand ones aren't terribly cheap. Cut-price brand new ones are rare too, so the cheapest thing can be to personally import one from the States (i.e. fly to New York, buy a Mac and bring it back with you).
GRAPHICS	Screen resolution is variable: typical modes would be 320x256 in 256 colours 640x256 in 16 colours or – with an expensive multi-sync monitor – an impressive 640x512, again in 16 colours. There's one hardware sprite – the cursor – but with that speedy ARM chip for power, the Archie's blindingly fast in software.	The mono-only SE has a screen resolution of 512x342, while the Mac II runs to a 1027x760 screen in 16 colours, chosen from a palette of more than 16 million!
MONITORS	B/w – composite video; colour – RGB + sync; no TV modulator.	As well as the built-in (SE) or dedicated (Mac II) Apple units, there are plenty of third-party monitors offering million-pixel screens and similar. Like most things Mac-ish, these get very pricey.
SOUND	The Archie's built in sound features 16 channels (in 8 stereo pairs) and a range of six octaves, all fed through a good-quality internal speaker.	The Mac's four-channel sound chip can produce some very acceptable noises – stereo on the Mac II – but you'll need a third-party MIDI port add-on if you're serious about music.
DRIVES, MICE & JOYSTICKS	The built-in drive is quiet and fast, and packs a healthy 800K onto a 3.5in disk. The Archie comes with a nice 3-button mouse – but has no joystick port!	The fast, reliable built-in drives pack 800K onto a 3.5in disk. The keyboard's very high-quality stuff, as is the one-button mouse.
SOFTWARE	Games for the Archie are rare things indeed. Superior and Grand Slam are both committed to supporting the machine, but for now the only major titles are <i>Zarch</i> and (for 310 owners) <i>Conqueror</i> , both ACE-rated games. There's still no sign of a game that really pushes the Archie to anything like its limits. The handful of graphics packages available should keep art-loving Archie owners happy for now. Other applications areas are ticking over nicely if not exactly booming.	Games software is not terribly plentiful on the Mac, though adventures are well catered for. There's a huge amount of graphics and desk-top publishing software – most of it firmly mono – and a fine range of titles for the business user. There's also plenty of great software for the MIDI musician, but it doesn't come cheap.
PROSPECTS	The Archie's educational leanings make for a poor games outlook – there's no sign of support from any of the big-league houses – and the lack of a joystick port doesn't help. The graphics software base would mushroom if Acorn cut their prices, but until then things don't look too hot here either.	The future for the Mac is excellent, but mostly on the serious side of things.
OVERALL	The Archimedes is years ahead of its time, and vastly more powerful than the competition. A stiff bit of price-cutting would make it an unbeatable leisure machine, but Acorn just don't seem to be interested. At the current price it's a worthwhile buy for computer scientists and people with money to burn, but that's about it.	The Mac's a very upmarket machine, and is priced accordingly. Almost essential for DTP users, it's a luxury item or Yuppie toy for the rest of us.
RATINGS	<div> <p>Graphics 5</p> <p>Sound 4</p> <p>SOFTWARE:</p> <p>Range 1</p> <p>Quality 2</p> <p>Prospects 2</p> </div> 	<div> <p>Graphics (SE) 3</p> <p>Sound 4</p> <p>SOFTWARE:</p> <p>Range 4</p> <p>Quality 5</p> <p>Prospects 4</p> </div> 

ATARI ST	COMMODORE AMIGA	IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
The 520STFM and 1040STF both come as combined keyboard/system/drive consoles.	The A500 is a single unit with built-in disk drive, while the A2000 has a separate keyboard and system box.	IBM's PC is the original, but the best buys these days are 'clones' like Amstrad's PC1512 and 1640. Specifications apply to most modern PCs, but check the details for yourself before buying.
The 520STFM has 512K of memory, while the 1040STF has 1Mb. Both use the Motorola 68000 processor.	The A500 has 512K of memory and the A2000 a hefty 1Mb, both of them using a Motorola 68000 for processing power.	PC compatibles normally have 512K or 640K of memory, with an Intel 8086 or related processor. (The 8088 is slower, while the 80286 and 80386 are faster but more expensive.)
Recommended retail prices are 520ST – £299.99, 520ST plus 20 free games – £399.99, 1040STF – £599.99. There's a strong second-hand market in 520ST's, but most of these are fitted with the old single-sided (360K formatted capacity) drive.	Recommended retail prices are: A500 £399, A2000 £1236. Shop around for lower prices or package deals. There's a fair old second-hand trade in unwanted A500's, though the recent drop in RRP means that prices here may not be too good. Also still available is the creaky old A1000, the first Amiga model and, with its lengthy boot-up sequence and puny (256K) memory, deservedly discontinued.	Prices start at around £400 for a mono PC, but a 640K machine with an EGA display and top-flight monitor will cost more like £1000. There's a thriving second-hand market, and even buying brand new you're well advised to shop around.
TV or colour monitor users can get at two screen modes on the ST, medium res (640x200 in 4 colours) and low res (320x200 in 16 colours), both working from a 512-colour palette. Users with mono monitors can only access one mode, high res, which gives them a 640x400 screen in black and white.	Hardware sprites and scrolling make conventional games easy to write, while the built-in blitter greatly speeds up large-scale graphics operations. Typical screen modes are 320x200 in 16 colours for games, 320x256 in 32 or 4096 colours for art, or 640x256 in 16 colours for serious use. In all cases, colours are taken from a palette of 4096.	The three main graphics standards are CGA, EGA and Hercules. None of these offer sprites or scrolling in hardware. The main CGA (Colour Graphics Adaptor) modes are 320x200 in 4 colours and 640x200 in mono. CGA has no palette as such: the 4-colour mode comes in two colour-scheme choices, but that's all. An EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adaptor) PC can produce these two CGA modes plus a few of its own, offering displays of up to 640x350 in 16 colours from a palette of 64. Hercules graphics are mono only, but with a maximum resolution of 720x348 they can be very useful for applications like DTP (Desk-Top Publishing).
RGB, Mono, or built-in TV modulator (520ST only – 1040ST needs separate modulator).	SCART output for e.g. Commodore's A1081 monitor (£349.99, but look out for bundling deals). TV modulators are available, but aren't included in the price.	Normally standard RGB, with no TV output.
The internal sound chip's poor, with only three channels and no stereo, but the built-in MIDI port's made the ST a must for penny-wise musicians.	Built-in sound is excellent, with 4 channels in 2 stereo pairs offering you a nine octave range or some reasonable human-ish speech. You'll need a third party add-on to get MIDI compatibility, mind you.	A weak sound standard is very much the PC's Achilles' heel as a games machine, and speaker quality is usually low accordingly. MIDI interfaces are available, but the ST and Mac still beat the PC as machines for the musically minded.
The internal drive stores 720K on a 3.5in disk, though there are still some old 520ST's around that can only manage half this capacity. A two-button mouse plugs into one of the inconveniently situated controller ports, leaving the other one free for a joystick.	The Amiga's built-in drive is often noisy and always slow, but it does pack 880K onto a 3.5in disk so it's not a total disaster. The two-button mouse takes up one of the machine's two controller ports.	Though 5.25in 360K disks are still the standard, the newer 3.5in 720K drives are becoming more common. There are two different joystick standards, IBM (which is analogue, and the norm for older or American games) and Amstrad (which takes a standard Atari-style stick).
With the best games support of any machine listed here, the ST's probably still leading the upgrade race. Graphics software's some way behind the Amiga but catching up fast, with new titles stretching the ST's limited hardware quite remarkably. The ST's built-in MIDI port has earned it outstanding support on the music front, with some excellent packages from a wide range of companies. Serious software's looking up too.	On the games front the Amiga's now coming out of the ST's shadow, at least to the extent that most ST games also appear in Amiga form. Unfortunately they are still usually straight conversions, taking no account of the Amiga's extra hardware. There's a wide range of art, video and animation packages for the machine, many of them excellent. Music's less well catered for, but the built-in hardware's got great potential.	There's a vast software base for PCs, but relatively few games that are good by modern standards. This situation's rapidly improving though, as is the art side of things (especially on the EGA front). Music software is available (if rather expensive), but it's only on the serious side of things that the PC really wins out.
Great, especially if the price cut materialises as expected. The ST's rapidly catching the 8-bit market leaders on numbers of titles, and easily outstripping them on quality.	Looking very bright now, thanks to Commodore's recent price cut.	Prospects for a PC games boom are good, especially if Amstrad's rumoured ultra-cheap PC leisure clone shows up.
An excellent all-rounder, the ST delivers no-frills power at an affordable price. It's number one for MIDI fans, terrific for games and – with mono monitor – a great machine for serious use as well.	Though its hardware makes it a great games machine, the Amiga still lacks the software to really show it off properly. It's a must-buy for the computer artist, however.	The PC's a fine all-round machine, and the workhorse of modern computing – but if you're just interested in games or music, you'd best look elsewhere.
<div data-bbox="142 1899 292 2067"> Graphics 4 Sound 3 SOFTWARE: Range 4 Quality 4 Prospects 5 </div> 	<div data-bbox="605 1899 755 2067"> Graphics 5 Sound 5 SOFTWARE: Range 3 Quality 4 Prospects 5 </div> 	<div data-bbox="1076 1899 1226 2067"> Graphics 4 Sound 1 SOFTWARE: Range 5 Quality 5 Prospects 4 </div> 

CONSOLE HARDWARE UPGRADE GUIDE

	SEGA	NINTENDO
RANGE	Mastersystem, Mastersystem Plus (includes Light Phaser and an extra game) and The Super System (includes Light Phaser and 3D glasses, plus 3D game).	The Control Deck (including Super Mario Bros), the Deluxe Set (including Robot - R.O.B. - and Zapper gun).
PRICES	The recommended retail prices are: Mastersystem £79.95, Mastersystem Plus £99.95 and the Super System £129.95. Accessories: Light Phaser £29.95 (with game cartridge £44.95), 3D glasses £39.95, control stick £14.95 and control pads £6.95 - note, the mini-sticks which were used with the control pads are no longer available. Sega have also recently released a rapid fire unit costing £5.95	The recommended retail prices are: Control Deck £99.95, Deluxe Set £149.95, Zapper gun £24.95, R.O.B. £49.95 and joystick £39.95.
MONITORS	A/V out and R/F out. The system's designed to plug straight into a T.V.	R/F out, separate audio and video out sockets. The Nintendo is designed to plug straight into a domestic T.V.
DRIVES, MICE & JOYSTICKS	The console supports two joysticks, the Light Phaser plugs into joystick port two. The 3D glasses slot into the card slot on the front of the console. Joysticks and pads have two buttons on each for game selection/firing.	The Nintendo supports two joysticks. The robot utilises the second port via the second controller.
SOFTWARE	Most of Sega's arcade games find their way onto the console, so there are plenty of action games to play. There are also a large number of games with extra appeal to younger gamers.	Super Mario Bros is one of the best games ever released, for either console or home computer so it's almost worth owning a system for that one game. Since the Nintendo launch in late '86 the range of software has been awful. The Japanese and Americans have had hundreds of games to choose from whereas we Brits have had precious few. Nintendo reckon that's all about to change though, and will be releasing 2-4 games per month.
PROSPECTS	The Sega console has dominated the U.K. console market for the last year-18 months, thanks to Nintendo's poor launch into the market at the end of '86. Games have since continued to come out at a steady rate of 4-5 per month for the console, and will continue to do so.	At the time of going to press the prospects look good, then again the prospects looked good when the machine was first launched.
OVERALL	If all you want to do is play games, all you need is a console. The Sega is currently the better supported machine but the Nintendo may soon start giving it a run for its money.	The Nintendo is a great machine, most of the software arcade style games, but there are some educational titles available. The Japanese machines can be fitted with extra disk drives and other widgets but the British models can't as yet, so you're still only going to be able to play games on the machine for the foreseeable future.
RATINGS	Graphics 4 Sound 3 Software: Range 3 Quality 3 Prospects 4 	Graphics 4 Sound 3 Software: Range 1 Quality 3 Prospects 3 

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RANDOM ACCESS

N'Gar Thrombobo continues his reign of terror, but has Horace Claghandle got something up his sleeve? Find out in part five of the riveting ACE serial. Then, when you've calmed down, have a go at solving the puzzle or completing the crossword - you might even win something for your efforts!

Doctor Slammer took off his overcoat and went outside. There was no solution but to go and visit his MP - but first he would visit his cousin in Australia. He started walking.

Horace Claghandle looked up briefly as he heard Doctor Slammer struggling with the interns outside, then returned to the keyboard of the Director's Amoeba. What Horace Claghandle was writing was no ordinary virus. The thing he was creating had a mind of its own. He called it MATAHARI (Machine-Accommodated Totally Annihilative and Horribly Active Recursive Intelligence), and was busy working on its data accumulation subroutines when a single line appeared on the screen:

"Something wonderful is about to happen to your..."

Horace Claghandle grabbed one of the meat cleavers Doctor Slammer kept hung on his office wall, and brought it down on the modem lead still plugged into the Amoeba fast enough to shave 17K of machine code off N'Gar Thrombobo's rear end as he retreated down the wire.

Now Horace Claghandle was fuming. He finished the program, saved it onto a floppy, then ran out of the asylum and down the drive towards the bus-stop.

N'Gar Thrombobo was packing his bags, and it was taking longer than he thought it would. There was a whole load of information, for a start, about the thermodynamics of sewerage compression that - well, he might need at some stage in the future...

It took him approximately three billionths of a second to work out how long it would take to save himself onto floppies (he didn't trust modems any more), and another five billionths of a second to tap into the local bus service's timetable and work out how much less time it would take an escaped lunatic with a meat cleaver to get to the sewerage works.

Horace Claghandle found Mr. Tord in the main pumping room, supervising the engineers as they tried to disconnect the pumping motors.

"Ah, you must be the lady from the software company to be sure to be sure," said Mr. Tord, who wore extremely thick, round glasses that didn't help his eyesight very much.

"Mr. Tord, I need to use your main computer terminal."

THE ACE SERIAL

The Git In The Machine: Part 5

"Oh, sure you do. Here, let me take your coat first," said Mr. Tord, reaching out and grabbing Horace Claghandle by the scalp. "My, this coat, it sure has to be one of d'heaviest coats of all," muttered Mr. Tord. He opened the door to the main stairwell, thinking it was the cloakroom, and hung Horace Claghandle on a hook that wasn't there. "Now madam, what is it you were saying...?"

Mr. Tord's visitor was gone.

"Well, isn't that the strangest thing!" he said to a large red fire extinguisher. Then he noticed something small and flat on the floor. "Ah, a letter. It must have fallen out of the lady's pocket," he said as he picked up the floppy disk.

N'Gar Thrombobo had gone on a drastic diet. He'd wiped out all the useless data he'd accumulated at the sewerage plant and got himself down to just over 500K of densely-packed programming. Once more he was a lean, hungry

fighting machine - now all he needed was a means of escape.

Mr. Tord was sitting at what he took to be his office desk, trying to open what he thought was an envelope with his penknife. After a few moments' wagging he succeeded only in breaking the blade.

"Damned thing!" he muttered, "I'll put it in the drawer for later."

He grabbed the drive switch on the console in front of him and pulled hard enough to yank the casing six inches out from the wall, and take half the wires off the back. He peered at the sticking drawer, pushed the envelope into the little gap he could see at the top, stood up, opened the door to the coffee machine, and tried to get in.

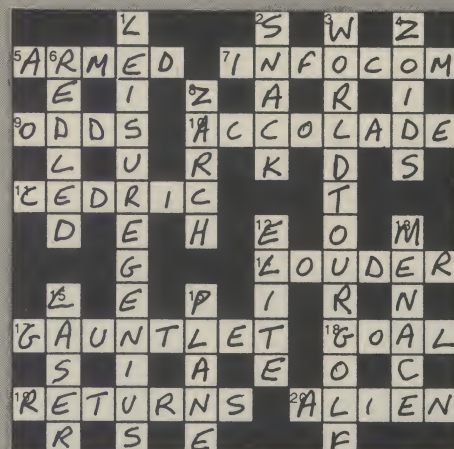
Sure that the sick, evil, tortured mind of Horace Claghandle was threatening to defeat him at the last moment by sabotaging the mainframe, N'Gar Thrombobo saved himself onto the floppy that had by some miracle appeared in the last functioning drive a fraction of a second before it stopped spinning for good.

But he had the feeling that he was not alone. That there was something there, something lurking in the blackness just outside the range of his perception. Something so terrifying, yet so irresistible that...

MATAHARI!

SOLUTION TO PRIZE CROSSWORD No8

The first correct entry out of the bag was, **Angela Bonner of Falmouth** who wins £25.00 of software for her micro. Here's what the completed crossword should have looked like...



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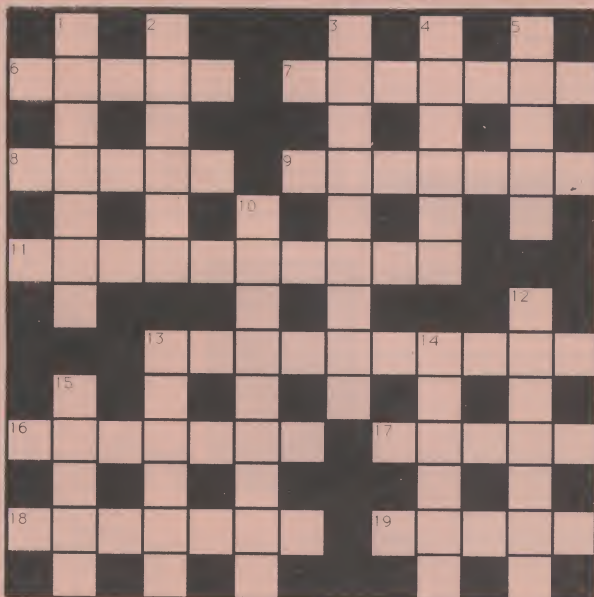
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THE ACE PRIZE CROSSWORD

No10

Set by Mips

The first correct entry taken from the postbag wins software worth £25.00. Closing date for entries is January 5th. The ACE crossword is cryptic. The answer might be an anagram, or formed from the end of one word and the beginning of another, or simply hinted at by the clue. Most - but not quite all - of the answers are computer related.

ACROSS

- Contagious game from Firebird (5)
- Parts starved of commercials (7)
- Give one a lesson to reform cheat (5)
- A loud explosion from Zortech (3,4)
- Knockout game from Hewson (10)
- Do I have sense to form a software house? (10)
- 'Blue Sun' - game developed by Hewson (7)
- Game in party Peter threw (1,4)
- Says once again they've been seen before (7)
- Scandinavian goblin strolling around (5)

DOWN

- Flaming winger's game (7)
- Additional problem about officer's software house (6)
- Habit-forming software house (9)
- Remembered about one being in the club (6)
- Way one put on weight (5)
- Tells one what to do (9)
- I compel new characters to turn into machine code (7)
- Entertains Sue and Sam playing together (6)
- A planet when about to revolve (6)
- Student always at the bar (5)

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THE ACE PUZZLE No10

Set by Archie Medes

I have a copy of the latest best-selling novel which I propose to read over a number of consecutive days. In addition, I have imposed a number of extra requirements relating to the number of pages to be read on each of the days. These are as follows:

1. On no single day do I wish to read more than 300 pages.
2. On each day after the first, I intend to read as many pages as indicated by the product of the digits of the page reached the night before.
3. The final day's reading should bring me EXACTLY to the last page of the book.

For example, if the book had 62

pages I might decide to read 24 pages the first day. This would mean that I would have to read 2 times 4 pages on the second day, thus bringing me to page 32 - i.e. 24 plus 8. The third day would need only 6 pages to be read (to page 38) and I would finish the book on the fourth day by reading 24 pages bringing me exactly to page 62.

Can you say what is the longest book (i.e. number of pages) that I can read using this set of rules, and how many days will it take?

Instead of working the puzzle out with pencil and paper, why not devise a simple listing that will allow your micro to solve it for you?

NAME.....

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SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO PRIZE PUZZLE 10, ACE, 4 QUEEN STREET, BATH BA1 1EJ. CLOSING DATE JANUARY 5TH

SOLUTION TO THE ACE PUZZLE No8

The first correct entry out of the post-bag was **Larry Barnes of Leeds** who wins £25.00 of software for his micro.

The four aces of spades originally occupied the following positions from the top of the pack:

33 97 161 193

The listing 'shuffles' and 'deals' a pack of 208 cards in the manner described in the puzzle. The enlarged pack is represented by an array PK(), each part of which is initially seeded with its position from the top of the pack. As the position of the cards is altered these values are transferred within the array. In this way the array represents the cards as they are at each stage of the deal, but the values held in the array are the initial positions of the cards at the beginning. Thus, when the pack is reduced to just four cards, these initial positions can be determined.

Lines 100 to 120 set up the array and place the original values in place. Each step of the shuffle, i.e. top card to bottom then discard top card, is performed by removing the top card (temporarily holding its value in vari-

able Z) and then shifting each of the units in the array up two places. This has the effect of also discarding the top card, as the card which was originally at third position is now on the top, and so on. The card held in variable Z is then replaced at the bottom of the pack (line 180). A count (C) keeps track of the number of cards currently in the pack and when this falls to 4 the program prints out the values in the remaining four sections of the array - that is, the initial positions that these cards occupied at the start.

LISTING

```
100 N=208
110 DIM PK(N)
120 FOR F=1 TO N:PK(F)=F:NEXT
130 C=N
140 Z=PK(1)
150 FOR F=1 TO C-2
160 PK(F)=PK(F+2)
170 NEXT
180 C=C-1:PK(C)=Z
190 IF C=4 THEN GOTO 210
200 GOTO 140
210 PRINT PK(1),PK(2),PK(3),PK(4)
```


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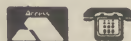
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Here's a great way of receiving free advice from public-spirited readers. If you make use of this service, please respect the Helpline code:

- If writing for help, enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.
- Do not make phone calls at anti-social hours.

I have completed the following: The Pawn, The Bard's Tale, Ultima IV, Phantasia I, Dracula, Never Ending Story, Zork III, Wishbringer, Enchanter, Borrowed Time, Kobayashi Naru, Heavy on the Magic, Legacy, The Prince of Magic, Claws of Despair, Wizards & The Princess. Derek Wong, 42 Ingram Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey. CR4 8EB.

Wishbringer, Labyrinth, The Hobbit, The Hulk, Spiderman, Seabase Delta, Kobayashi Naru. Ann Gray, 9 Ainess Close, Birchwood, Lincoln, Lincs. LN6 0YX.

The Pawn, Sorcerer, Planetfall, Leather Goddesses of Phobos. C.F.H. Bass, 21 Third Close, E Molesey, Surrey, KT8 9PW.

Heroes of Karn, Imagination, Seabase Delta, D.A.A n Everything, Fourth Protocol I, II & III, Ship of Doom, Message from Andromeda, Kobayashi Naru, Questprobe III, Forest at Worlds End, Wild Bunch, Knight Tyme, Spellbound, The Hobbit, Buggy Part 1 only, Mops To, Heroes of Karn, Seabase Delta, Gremlins, Lord of the Rings (Part II only), Robin of Sherwood, After Shock. Russell Cooper, 12 Butlers Close, 52 Butlers Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham. B20 2PA.

Let me know your problem with Football director, The Double Soccer Boss, Premier League and Soccer Star and I'll sort you out. Send SAE to: Paul Phillips, 29 Ormestone House, Hartcliffe, Bristol.

Adventure Quest, Aftershock, Apache Gold, Arnold Goes to Somewhere Else, Boggit, Bored of the Rings, Brawn Free, Castle Blackstar, Castle of Skull Lord, Classic Adventure, Colossal Adventure, Colour of Magic, Crystal Theft, Dodgy Geezers, Dracula, Dungeon Adventure, Dungeons, A.A n Everything, Emerald Isle, Enchanter, Erik The Viking, Escape from Khoshima, Espionage Island, Fantasia Diamond, Forest at Worlds Ends, Heavy on the Magic, Heroes of Karn, Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, Hobbit, Imagination, Inca Curse, Jewels of Babylon, Kentilla, Lords of Time, Message of Andromeda, Mindshadow, Morden's Quest, Necris Dome, Never Ending Story, Price of Magic, Project Volcano, Qor, Questprobe III, Red Moon, Return to Eden, Seabase Delta, Seas of Blood, Smugglers Cove, Snowball, Souls of Darkon, Spellbreaker, Spytek, Subsnk, Sydney Affair, Terrormolinos, The Case of the mixed-up Shymer, The Trial of Arnold Blackwood, Vera Cruz Affair, Very Big Cave Adventure, Warlord, Wise and Fool of Blackwood, Worm in Paradise, Zork I

Joan Pancott. Telephone 0305 784155 - Any Day - Noon to 10pm. For technical help on Commodore 64 Basic and Machine/Assembler language. Please contact Johnathan Kendall (for most problems would you please write) I will endeavour to reply to all letters - if you enclose a stamped addressed envelope! Johnathan Kendall, 27 Bishop Bridge Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 4ES. Tel: 0603 625987

THE ACE HELPLINE

The Pawn, Sorcerer, Planetfall, Leather Goddess of Phobos.

Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy Colin Bass, 21 Third Close, E Molesey, Surrey, KT8 9PW.

The Pawn plus early stages for Guild of Thieves (I've only scored 300+ points so far). Clive, 66 Billett Lane, Berkhamstead, Herts, HP4 1DR.

Jack The Ripper (p1-3), Dracule (p1-3), Hampstead, Big Sneeze and others. N Buzzard, 11 Faversham Drive, Weston-super-Mare, Avon, BS24 9NZ.

I can help Spectrum owner with GAC, +2 loading problems, removing attribute clash + any basic programming problems, GAC, PAW and I also have an extensive knowledge of ZX BASIC. I can help fellow P B Mers on Hade Games 'Avalon'. Just send an SAE to: Matt Burke, 33 Brookhouse Hill, Fulwood, Sheffield, S10 3TB.

Adventure Quest, Beyond Zork, Infidel, Plundered Hearts, Starcross, Trinity, Castle Blacktar, Classic/Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Emerald Isle, Gnome Ranger, Guild of Thieves, Hacker, H.H.G.T.G, Jinxter, Knight Orc, Leather Goddesses, Lords of Time, Mindshadow, Nord and Bert, The Pawn, Planetfall, Price of Magic, Red Moon, Return to Eden, Snowball, Wishbringer, Worm in Paradise. Phil Armstrong, 92 Dryden Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear. NE9 5TX. Tel: (091) 4875639

The Colour of Magic Part 1 and some of Part 2. John Morris, 130 Avondale Road, Shipley, West Yorkshire. Tel: 0274 586238 weekday: 3-6pm, weekends all day.

For tech help on Dungeon Master Tel 0734 780508, ask for Chris.

Amiga owner willing to swap hints & tips on the following games:- Great Giana Sisters, Leathernecks XRS5, F18 Interceptor, Test Drive, Xenon, Firepower, Hollywood Strip Poker, Tetris, ECO, Vampire Empire, Soccer Supremo, Garrison I & II, Bubble bobble and over 100 more. Mr S Lyle, 27 Stansted Close, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2TW. Tel: 0245 356641 after 8pm or weekends

Adventure Land, Colossal Adventure, Circus, Colditz, Greedy Gulch, Jewels of Babylon, Knights Quest, Magic Mountain, Pharaoh's Tomb, Eye of Bain, Planet of Death, Ship of Doom, Espionage Island, Hobbit, Invincible Island, Inca Curse, Ten Little Indians, Perseus and Andromeda, Lords of Time, SAE required with all requests for help. Nirmal Singh, 104 Vansittart Road, London, E7 0AA.

Colossal Cave (original adventure), Guild of Thieves, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, The Pawn, Jinxter. Clive J Mewse, 66 Billett Lane, Berkhamstead, Herts, HP4 1DR.

All aspects of BASIC especially adventures, debugging, compression and protection, simple machine code including RSXS, playtesting, poking. Please state level of understanding. Have got a CPC464, GT64, Multiface II+, DK 'tronics Speech rom. General Amstrad queries welcome but solutions not guaranteed. Sean McManus, 226 Chertsey Rise, Stevenage, Herts. SG2 9JQ.

The Pawn and Knight Orc (part 1 and early part 2). Shazad Ahmed, Tel: 01-340 9176 (4-10pm).

Bard's Tale I & II, Ultima IV, Phantasia 1, Gnome Ranger, Mindshadow. Derek Wong, 42 Ingram Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 8EB.

Dungeon Master SAE to: Anthony Hopkins, 91 Springfield Avenue, Sandiacre Nottingham, NG10 5NA.

Commodore 64 help service, a new, free way 2 reviewing help on all games. Every arcade game is covered with pokes maps and tips. Old and new games send for information. Mark Essen, 26 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Huddersfield, HD7 3DL.

Jinxter, Pawn, Guild of Thieves, Leather Goddesses, Colossal Cave, Mr X. Clive Mewse, 438A Ewel Road, Tolworth, Surbiton, KT6 7EL.

The Pawn, Guild of Thieves, Jinxter, Corruption, The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, Hollywood Hijinx and I have 80+ points on Wishbringer. Anil Tohani, 5 Orchard Avenue, Rainham, Essex RM13 9NY.

Any help on Ultima V appreciated. All letters answered. I have most character replies on disc in text files, almost complete dungeon plans, and will attempt to reciprocate on any info. N.B.H Vickerstaff, 670 Yarm Road, Eaglescliffe, Cleveland, TS16 0DP. Tel: 0642 781073

Help on Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, Tasword, Qualitass, Tasprint, DMP2000. Ben Taylor, 5 Hope Street, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 9SB. Also help wanted on Stationfall.

C6464/128 Help Service, write to me with a list of games that you want help on and I will send it back post haste. Please send a SAE and remember it is for your arcade type games only. Write to Mark Essen, 26 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Huddersfield, HD7 3DL. Hurry!

Fed up with a crap picture on your MCOI with Atari ST? SAE for help sheet to: C Parker, 14 Cross Lanes, Pill, Bristol BS20 0JQ. Phone Pill 5242 after 6pm.

For technical help on all aspects of 68000 assembly language programming on the Atari ST, send sae, to: Simon Jones, 267 Ansty Road, Wyken, Coventry CV2 3FL.

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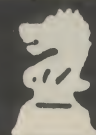
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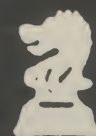
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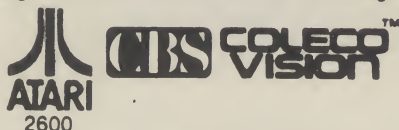
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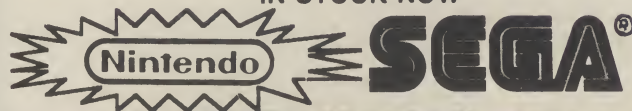
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THE BLITTER END...



JUST SAY NO TO TORTILLA CHIPS

Yes folks, even the finest brains and highest minds of the country are reduced to petty back-knifing and poor sportsmanship by those oh-so-competitive board games. Take revered ACE staff writer and all-round snuggly person Andy Smith, for instance. Andy is pictured here at Grandslam's press launch of *Espionage*, and doesn't he look pleased with himself. Small wonder: he wiped out not only the player opposite but indeed all other journalists present at the launch, thereby winning himself a bottle of champagne. Are we elated by this victory over our rivals? Do we intend to gloat over their strategic shortcomings? In a word, no. What should be one of our proudest moments ever is instead one of deep shame. The plain truth is, Andy had played the game before. In a late night session of board games and Mexican food, the lad was intensively coached in *Espionage* tactics. It's rumoured that other ACE writers were involved: the whole team withdrew before medical tests could reveal the tell-tale traces of paprika and chillies, so we may never know for sure. This scandal may rock the world of games journalism on its heels, but we Blitter-ites felt compelled to speak out in the interests of fair play and traditional British muddle-headedness. Naturally, we also felt compelled to strip the disgraced Smith of his champagne.

(Left) Andy Smith, still smug before his downfall: clearly, he's not a man to go hunting bubbly with.



FREE GAMES!

Mr David Willats of Clacton On Sea is pretty chuffed at the moment, so are Robert Whatcott of Evesham and Richard Moore of Leeds, why? Because they won our U.S. Gold competition, which means they'll all be getting FREE games for the next YEAR! These 25 lucky runners up each win themselves completely brilliant ACE tee-shirts. D. Hamm, Reading. Gary Morton, Bristol. Simon Rinaldo, Bedford. Lee Kennedy, Hartlepool. D. Rutland, Sheffield. Kristian Streeter, Hampton. Edward Green, Faversham. Noel Mewish, London. Darren France, Rotherham. Richard Geddes, Ryton. Yuk Fai Simon Lai, London. Martin Grant, Rotherham. Sean Bradbury, ST Albans. A. Owens, Leicester. Noel Arrowsmith, Brandon. Michael Dorke, Swansea. J. Goman-Smith, Woking. Jason Nuell, Bristol. Jason Howes, Eastbourne. K. Naqui, Hounslow. Franco Livia, Edinburgh. Martin Forrester, Derby. G. Palfrey, ST Andrews. Gary King, Edinburgh. Chris Johnson, Northwich.

TRACK(S) AND FIELD

Truth to tell, it's been something of a month for boardgames. It only takes a casual glance at pages 68-70 to see just how far things have gone, but if further

proof were needed just take a look at this picture of our esteemed editor Graeme Kidd. Firmly in the grip of boardgame fever, Graeme has actually donned a suit to meet his heroes, Ake and

Henrik Andersson. In protocol terms this puts the authors of CDS's Tank Attack somewhere above HM the Queen, Sir Clive Sinclair and even ACE publisher Kevin Cox. (The addition of a hat would have afforded the Scandinavian pair a near-divine status, but mercifully Graeme stopped just short of this excess.)

Veteran Blitter End readers should note the vehicle in the background of this photo. We have it on good authority that this is in fact one of CRL's new company cars, as driven by Chief Exec Mike 'Road Warrior' Hodges. However, given that the photo was taken at the National Army Museum in Chelsea, there may just possibly be another explanation.



Graeme Kidd, flanked (note fluent use of military jargon) by Ake and Hendrik.

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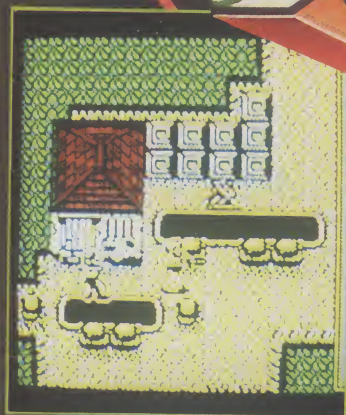
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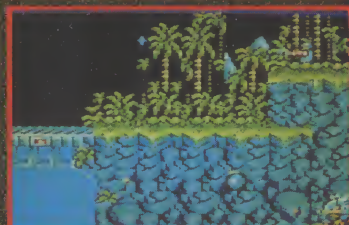
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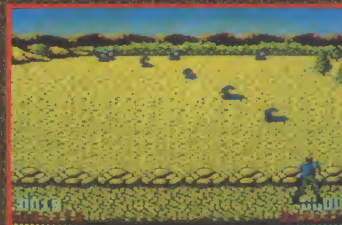
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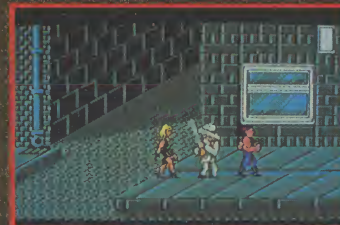
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